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ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION (A.D. 1611),

WITH AN EXPLANATORY AND CRITICAL

Commentary

AND

A Revision of the Translation,

BY BISHOPS AND OTHER CLERGY

OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH.

EDITED

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JOB.

INTRODUCTION.

THE book of Job differs in many important points from all productions of the Hebrew mind. From beginning to end there is a complete absence of reference or allusion to the events of Israelitish history, and to the institutions of the Mosaic law. It combines in a very singular degree various elements of human thought, and most opposite characteristics of human genius. Its most striking features are depth and boldness of speculative inquiry, of research, not only into what may be known of the dealings of God with man, but of the principles on which those dealings rest. The characters stand out each and all in broad, strong outline, with traits of surpassing delicacy and vigour. The historical narrative is clear and rapid, with the simplicity and grace of antique letters; the dialogues full of vehement outbursts, vivid imagery, and sudden alternations of passionate struggles, and deep, calm, earnest contemplation of spiritual truths. The reader is irresistibly impressed with the reality of the transactions, with the truth and naturalness of the feelings brought into play, while he recognizes in the construction of the plot, and the gradual unfolding of the design, the work of a master spirit, guided, whether consciously, or with the sure instinct of genius, by those principles in which the highest art and the most perfect nature meet and are reconciled. Not less remarkable is the style: it bears throughout unequivocal marks of originality and independence. The language has peculiarities for which it is difficult to account at any period which modern critics have assigned to the composition. On the one hand, it abounds in archaic forms, which occur elsewhere in the Pentateuch alone, or in the very earliest relics of Hebrew poetry; and in words unknown to Hebrew writers, of which the explanation, at the best conjectural, is to be sought in the cognate dialects, or in Egyptian. On the other hand, it has many words, and idiomatic expressions, which occur only in the latest Hebrew writings, and in those writings indicate the rapid progress of the influence of the Syriac or Chaldean dialect, which before our Lord's time had so far changed the vernacular language of Palestine, that the ancient books required for popular use, and public reading, the medium of a continuous interpretation. For these and other reasons, to be considered in this Introduction, critics in this, and in former ages, have arrived at most opposite conclusions, touching the character of the book, whether it is to be regarded as a history, a theological or philosophical speculation, a didactic poem, or a dramatic composition: touching its origin, whether it is the production of a Hebrew, or of a native of the district in

which the transactions took place; and if so, whether we have an entire translation, or whether the dialect in which it was written so nearly resembled that of Palestine as to require little change to make it intelligible to Hebrews: and above all at what date it was composed, or first made known to the Israelites. With a view to these and other questions, which affect the object, bearings, and integrity of the book, we have in the first place to consider its contents.

§ 2. *Contents of the Book.*

The book consists of five parts. The first part presents in a succinct form the historical facts on which the arguments are based. Job is set before us as the model of a perfect man, "without his like in all the earth," "a perfect and upright man, one that loveth God and escheweth evil." This character rests on the attestation of God himself, and it must be borne in mind throughout the following discussions. The outward circumstances of the Patriarch are equally remarkable: under the protection of God, surrounded by a numerous family, with high rank and immense possessions, he attains to the maturity of life, (see note on ch. xxix. 4), and is recognized as "the greatest of the sons of the East." He thus exemplifies that union between perfect goodness and temporal happiness, which was regarded by ancient dogmatists not merely as the ordinary and normal, but as the invariable result of the divine government of the world. It is, however, obvious, that such a combination is open to the cavil, or the very serious question, whether goodness which secures such results may not be a refined form of selfishness. The question, doubtless, is one which presented itself very early to the minds of thoughtful men. It was one which, once raised, demanded an answer. In order to have the question proposed in the most searching form, and the answer given on absolute authority, we are admitted to the council of heaven; there alone can the deep mysteries of existence be examined and fully comprehended. The question is asked by a Being, who is called "the adversary," and who is described as going to and fro the earth, searching and scrutinizing all things, with an avowed, and, undoubtedly, malignant intention of detecting evil. Doth Job fear God for nought? Is not his piety simply the result of calculation? If he were once convinced that the calculation was a mistake, if the protection and outward proofs of favour were withdrawn, would he not renounce God? One answer only could be given which would meet the cavil fully. Satan is permitted to put forth his hand. He destroys Job's wealth, Job's children. The piety of Job bears that trial, and is intact. One only suggestion remains for the Adversary: though all else is gone, health remains, and with health the possibility, and hope of restoration. That too Satan is permitted to assail; Job is smitten at once with elephantiasis, the most terrible and loathsome disease known in the East, one which was peculiarly regarded as a result and proof of divine anger, one that might convince Job, if his piety were dependent upon temporal blessings, that it was unavailing[1]. His wife breaks down under that trial, and, becoming an unconscious, but effective instrument of the adversary, in his words counsels her husband to renounce God. Job remains stedfast. Grateful for past good, he is resigned to present woe: no sinful word escapes from his lips. So far Satan has been baffled. He has no more cavil to suggest. To the end of the book he passes altogether out of sight. No allusion is made to him in the following dialogue, nor at the close, when judgment is finally pronounced by God.

But with the departure of Satan the argument is not closed. It is indeed evident, that although the question was settled as regarded that special case, and the possibility of a good man retaining his piety, independent of reward, and in spite of apparently causeless suffering, had been demonstrated; yet the mind of any one, who reflected upon the facts even of that, would be sorely troubled, and that numerous other questions, touching the relations between divine justice and human destinies, called for consideration. Then follows the dis-

[1] *'Ως καὶ θεοῦ κατ' αὐτοῦ χωροῦντος*, Didymus Alexandrinus, 'Fragmenta in Job,' p 1126, ed. Migne. He attributes the words of Job's wife to the suggestion of Satan, p. 1130.

cussion which exhausts all that the human mind could suggest, apart from the revelation of a future state of compensation, and retributive justice. It arises in the most natural manner as a result of the visit of condolence on the part of three men, who represent the wisdom and experience of the age. Some time had elapsed in the interval, during which the disease had made formidable progress, so that Job was no longer recognized by his friends, and his mind had contemplated on every side the mysterious bearings of the dispensation. They sate by Job seven days, silent in presence of his great agony: and then partly, it may be, trusting in their sympathy (see ch. vi. 14—21), or unable to repress his sorrow, he speaks out all that is in his heart, not indeed renouncing God, but cursing the day of his own birth, and abandoning all hope save that of death. See c. iii., which introduces the second part.

With the answer to that outburst begins the series of discourses which continues, probably for several successive days. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar bring forward arguments, which are met and refuted by Job.

The first discussion is opened by Eliphaz, ch. iv. and v., in a speech of great beauty and power: it continues without a break to the end of ch. xiv. The results may be briefly summed up. Job's friends hold the theory, which appears *up to that time* to have been unquestioned, that there is an exact and invariable correlation between sin and suffering. Afflictions are always penal; they issue in the destruction of those who are radically opposed to God, and do not submit to His judgments. If the sinner repents and turns to God, restoration to peace, and even increased prosperity, may be expected. Still the mere fact of the affliction proves the previous commission of some special sin; and the demeanour of the afflicted determines his relation to God. Applying these principles to Job's case, they are in the outset scandalized by the vehemence of his complaints, and when they find that he has no confession to make, but disavows all special guilt, they become convinced that his faith is unsound; his protestations seem to them blasphemous; and their tone, which was at first courteous, though warning, becomes by degrees stern, and even harsh, and menacing. It is indeed clear, that, unless their partial and exclusive theory is abandoned, they must needs be led on to an unqualified condemnation of Job.

In order to do justice to Job's answers, we must bear in mind, (1) that the direct object of the trial, though one of which he and his friends are equally unconscious, was to ascertain whether, when deprived of all earthly blessings, and visited by all earthly sufferings, he would renounce God, and (2) that his moral integrity is affirmed by God Himself. He knows that he is not an offender, as they assume: he knows that, whatever may be the object of the afflictions, which, as he admits, come from God, they are not proofs of guilt, for God knows his innocence. This consciousness, which cannot, of course, be tested by man, enables him fearlessly to examine the position of his opponents. He denies, evidently for the first time giving distinct form to old misgivings, that punishment in this life inevitably follows upon guilt, or proves its commission. Appealing to experience, he declares boldly, that in point of fact, prosperity and misery are not always, or even generally, commensurate with man's deserts; "the tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure," ch. xii. 6. In the government of the world he can see but one thing clearly; all results and events are in God's hand, but of the principles by which they are regulated he knows nothing, and he is sure that his friends are equally ignorant; hence he accuses them of hypocrisy, using false arguments, and mocking God, ch. xiii. 4—10. Still he doubts not that God is just, and that, dark as His ways are, the just cause must be vindicated, "though He slay me yet will I wait for Him," (xiii. 15, see note), and "He will be my salvation." There is, therefore, but one course open to Job, and that he takes. He turns to supplication, he implores God to withdraw His hand, and to give him a full and public trial. Admitting that in common with other men he has sinned in youth, and is, by reason of his birth, naturally unclean (xiii. 26, xiv. 4), he still relies on God's mercy: but inasmuch as he is utterly without hope of restora-

tion in this life, and regards death as the end of all earthly existence, he is led to a thought, which henceforth recurs, until it is developed into a living hope; he prays that Sheol may be to him a hiding place, where he may rest until God calls him forth, and manifests Himself in love: with that hope he will be content to wait (see notes on xiv. 13—15); but in this life he looks for nothing but misery, "his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn."

In the second colloquy (xv.—xxi.) the three interlocutors take a more advanced position. Eliphaz (xv.) now assumes that Job has been actually guilty of sins, which brought on merited punishment, and sees in his rebellious struggles a sure token of approaching destruction. Bildad charges him with ungodliness (xviii.); Zophar holds that the sufferings and losses of Job are but an inadequate retribution for former sins (xx.).

This series of accusations brings out the inmost thoughts of Job. He recognizes God's hand in his afflictions (xvi. 7—16), but denies that they are brought on by wrong doing (v. 17); he claims the right to pray, and appeals to God; but without hope, save that which, as he has already intimated, may survive in Sheol. This thought becomes clearer as the controversy proceeds, (compare xiv. 13, xvi. 18, 19, xvii. 8, 9; and note on xvii. 14—16); until it finds full expression in the declaration, which Job introduces with a formal announcement of its importance, that at the latter day, God, his Redeemer, will stand upon the earth, and manifest Himself to Job, who will see him with his own eyes and in the integrity of his personal existence: (see notes on xix. 23—28). In the concluding discourse of this series, ch. xxi., he shews the impossibility of vindicating God's justice on any other principle, since unbroken prosperity throughout life is frequently the portion of wicked and utterly ungodly men.

The third colloquy (xxii.—xxxi.) represents the exhaustion of the three speakers. Eliphaz attempts to shew that the position formerly occupied by Job presented temptations to certain crimes, which the punishments inflicted upon him prove that he must have committed. Still he suggests that submission to God may still lead to restored communion, and as a result, to vast wealth, perfect security, and above all, to increased means of benefiting mankind. Bildad urges, not without dignity and force, the incomparable majesty of God, and the worthlessness of man, but leaves Job's arguments untouched. Zophar is altogether silent.

Job, on the other hand, repeats his former statements, and enforces them with new arguments. His own innocency, his longing for judgment, the misery of the oppressed, the triumph of the oppressors, are brought forward (xxiii., xxiv.). In the last two discourses, when his opponents have withdrawn from the contest, Job states his own deliberate opinion upon all the points of the controversy. All creation is confounded by God's majesty, man catches but a faint echo of His Word, and is wholly unable to comprehend His ways. He then draws out the great truths, which though imperfectly understood, and unfairly applied, underlay his opponents' arguments; and, correcting his own hasty and unguarded statements, describes the sure destruction which, sooner or later, awaits the wicked: see notes on ch. xxvii. Then follows the grand passage (ch. xxviii.) in which Job shews that the marvellous ingenuity and powers of man give him no insight at all into the unsearchable wisdom of the Creator, and that his own wisdom and understanding consist wholly in the fear of the Lord and in departing from evil. The remainder of his discourse (xxix.—xxxi.) contains a description of his former greatness contrasted with his actual misery; and a vindication of his character from the charges made or suggested by his opponents.

Third part. At this point (xxxii.) a new speaker is introduced. Elihu, a young man connected by descent with the family of Job, justifies his interference by two allegations; first, that the three friends had failed; they had advanced without proving charges against Job, and shewn themselves bigoted and unjust; and, secondly, that Job had maintained his own righteousness in a spirit which arraigned the righteousness of God. He professes to set forth a new and different theory of chastisement. Its main and character-

istic purport is instruction. God speaks to man, and teaches him, opens his ear and seals his instruction, in order to save him from ruin. Above all, He[1] prepares him by the intervention of an angel, specially charged with the work of mediation, for repentance, and restoration to a state of grace. Elihu then argues that the charge of unrighteousness brought against God is at once blasphemous and irrational. God is the only source of justice; it is impossible for Him to be unjust: by His absolute wisdom He knoweth all things; by His absolute power He controls all events with the one eternal purpose of establishing the cause of righteousness, every chastisement being at once needful, and exactly proportioned to the offence. If prayer seem to be unavailing, it is only when it is offered in a disobedient and faithless spirit. The last discourse of Elihu (xxxvi.—xxxvii.) touches with great force upon the mercy and justice of God's interventions, and the imminent peril of those who disregard them; it ends with a passage in which it is shewn that the great object of all natural phenomena is to set forth the greatness and goodness of God, and to *teach* His creatures. The last words of Elihu are apparently spoken while the storm is coming on which ushers in the approaching Theophany. His general conclusion is briefly stated: though unsearchable, God the Almighty is just and merciful, and therefore to be feared.

From this analysis it is obvious that weighty truths have been developed in the discussion. Nearly every theory of the possible objects, and uses of suffering, has been reviewed. A great and most remarkable advance has been made towards the apprehension of the great truth by which alone the righteousness of God can be fully vindicated. Still, the mystery of the dispensation in question has not been cleared up. We are expressly told in the outset, that its immediate and real object was to test the sincerity of Job, and thereby to set at rest the question, whether goodness in its highest aspects, integrity towards man, and devout fear of God, is independent of outer circumstances. This object never occurs to the mind of Job, of his three friends, or of Elihu. It is an object of incomparable importance, touching the basis of all moral worth. It was not one which would present itself to the mind of the sufferer, nor one that could be discovered without a special revelation by those who witnessed his misery. Hence the necessity for the Theophany. Out of the whirlwind Jehovah speaks.

Fourth part. In two distinct addresses the Almighty reproves and silences the murmurs of Job (xxxviii.—xli.). Not that God condescends, strictly speaking, to argue with His creature. He does more. He illustrates the Power of the Creator by a marvellously comprehensive survey of the glory of creation, and His Providence by a review of the phenomena of the animal kingdom. From both Job is led to infer that purposes impenetrable by the human mind are contemplated by the Omniscient, and that man's one duty is submission. In order to argue, as Job had purposed, with the Almighty, he ought previously to understand the reasons why instincts so strange and manifold are given to creatures, which are far below man, and yet independent of him (xxxviii. 39). The first address suffices to reduce Job to submission: he confesses his vileness and acknowledges his inability to answer his Maker (xl. 4, 5). The second address suggests a different thought. A charge of injustice against God is equivalent to an assumption that he who brings it is competent to rule the universe. He should be able to reduce all creatures to order; but so far from that, man cannot even subdue the irrational monsters of creation. Baffled by the brute strength of Behemoth, and the terrific force of Leviathan, how can he contend with Him who made and rules them all?

Fifth part. Job's unreserved submission terminates his trial. His integrity is recognized, and his friends are declared not to have spoken the truth, a fault which, however, as proceeding from a mistaken apprehension of divine justice, is pardoned on the intercession of Job. The restoration of Job's earthly prosperity, which is an inevitable result of the divine manifestation, sym-

[1] Maimonides notes this as the special difference between Elihu and other speakers. 'More Nevochim,' III. c. 23.

bolizes the final compensation of the righteous for all the sufferings of life.

§ 3. *Object of the Book.*

The main object of the book as deduced from this analysis is obvious. It certainly cannot be, as some have assumed, to shew that the ancient doctrine of connection between guilt and misery, and of divine retribution apportioning to each his deserts, is radically unsound. The partial application of that doctrine is condemned, and the impossibility of vindicating it by facts within the sphere of human cognizance is fully demonstrated[1], but the principle on which it rests is recognized distinctly by Job, when he speaks out his deepest convictions, and is confirmed by his own restoration to God's favour and to earthly happiness. One object, which undoubtedly was contemplated by the writer as of paramount importance, and is felt by most readers as that of deepest interest, is to shew that a thorough belief in God's righteousness involves belief in a future judgment; but even this could not have been the direct and primary object of the work, since no allusion is made to it in the last discourse of Job, or even, as might have been expected, in that of the Almighty. Like all other intimations of the doctrine in the Old Testament, those in this book are throughout expressions of faith and hope, anticipations not resting on previous revelation, but the spontaneous product of the human spirit in contact with the mysteries of existence, preparing the way for the future manifestation of the truth by the Son of God. But the direct object of the whole work is stated at the outset, and pervades every portion of the dialogue; it is to shew that although goodness, by virtue of the divine appointment, and as a result of divine governance, has a natural tendency to secure a full measure of temporal happiness; yet that in its essence it is independent of such a result. Goodness consists in the fear of God, depending upon a loving appreciation of what a good man instinctively feels to be His essential characteristics; and in the hatred of evil, not merely for its effects upon human happiness, but as in itself abhorrent to a mind conscious of the difference between right and wrong. These convictions are the central principles of Job's mind, but their sincerity could only be demonstrated by the withdrawal of all outward conditions, on which a purely utilitarian theory of morals would represent them as dependent. Selfishness in some form, in the case of noble spirits in the most refined and subtle form, is declared by the adversary to be the basis on which all apparent goodness rests. That question is tried in the case of Job. Every form of calamity is brought to bear upon him: and his spirit, quick, sensitive, and open to all natural and human affections, feels each acutely; but he bears them all without a murmur; no word of complaint is elicited by the destruction of his wealth; bereaved of his children he blesses the name of Jehovah, struck by a loathsome and incurable disease, which, as he well knew, all men would regard as a proof of God's wrath, and tempted by his wife in the very words of Satan, he utters a sublime expression of resignation; nor are any accents of upbraiding wrung from him until he is driven to agony, first by the silence and then by the insinuations and open accusations of his friends. To retain a firm hold upon the integrity which had marked his early career, and an absolute faith in the essential attributes of God under such a trial, was a sufficient answer to the question. But the long and bitter struggle produced other effects: it drew out from himself and his opponents an inquiry unparalleled for depth and fearlessness into the general purport and objects of divine chastisements[2]; and it developed in Job's own spirit a longing for a future judgment which issues in a full and assured anticipation of deliverance. Still, having no objective grounds for such a hope, he limits it to the vindication of his own integrity, and of God's justice; and thereby unconsciously meets the whole question whether selfishness in any form is the motive or mainspring

[1] This is the object of the book according to Ibn Ezra, 'I. G. I.' II. p. 421.

[2] This is characteristically held to be the main object of the book by Maimonides, the most thoughtful and learned of all the Rabbinical teachers: "It is an example to draw out and illustrate the opinions of man concerning Providence." 'More Nevochim,' III. 22.

of his life. Such would seem to be the central and primary principle of this book; it is that which all readers, whether or not they may be satisfied with the answer, or admit the cogency of the argument, recognize, and consciously or unconsciously discuss, when they attempt to unfold its meaning.

§ 4. *Integrity of the Book.*

Four portions of the book have been attacked at various times as interpolations. 1. The historical portion, at the introduction and close, was formerly rejected by some critics, and though at present commentators, without an exception, repudiate that judgment, their arguments deserve consideration, for they have bearings of importance upon other contested parts of Holy Scripture. There is a marked and obvious difference in the style of these chapters and that of the discourses: but a similar difference exists in all other books when narrative is blended with rhetorical or poetical portions; and the best critics, judging from a purely literary point of view, agree that the antique character of the narrative is proved by its grandeur and simplicity; thus Renan, while Ewald, with his usual force and felicity of expression, says, "these prosaic words harmonize thoroughly with the old poem in subject-matter and thought, in colouring and in art, also in language so far as prose can be like poetry; and every thing which has been alleged against them is sheer misapprehension, or unimportant." p. 54. One point of special importance is, that the divine name Jehovah is used constantly in the narrative, and once only in the whole series of discourses, a fact which, on the theory of some modern critics, would be conclusive as to diversity of origin. It may be accounted for, to some extent, on exegetical principles, the Great Name being naturally used by the historian who reveals the hidden principles of divine action, and describes occurrences in the world of spirits: whereas the human agents, who do not belong to the family of Israel, not less naturally employ those names by which The Eternal was known to the early Patriarchs. These principles, if admitted, have wider application, and should suggest caution in dealing with all similar phenomena in the Bible. Other objections, such as the difficulty of reconciling the doctrinal views and form of worship, and also some occurrences, with those indicated in the discourses of Job, are now generally abandoned, it being acknowledged that the narrative, as it stands, is free from interpolation, and that the whole work would be unintelligible without it.

2. Objection is taken to the passage ch. xxvii., from *v.* 7 to the end of the chapter, on the ground that the view of God's retributive justice is incompatible with other discourses of Job. Dr Kennicott, whose opinion has been adopted by Eichhorn and Mr Froude, supposes that it contains the missing speech of Zophar in the third conference. It has, however, been shewn above, that the argument is perfectly suitable to Job's position and character. It corrects and supplements previous assertions, which on consideration he feels bound to retract: it contains an intimation of future retribution (see *v.* 8), such as is not found in the discourses of other speakers: the whole chapter is thoroughly coherent; the first part is admitted by all to belong to Job, nor can this portion be disjoined from it without damage to the sense. To these and other points noticed in the commentary, it may be added that Renan, a most competent authority in a matter of taste, declares that it is one of the finest developments in the poem: it is strikingly unlike the speeches of Zophar in tone and spirit: and Ewald says "only a grievous misunderstanding of the whole book could have misled the modern critics, who hold that this passage is interpolated or misplaced."

3. The last address of the Almighty from xl. 15 to xli. 34, has been regarded as an interpolation. It might, as some critics affirm, be omitted without affecting the argument, and is said in some points to contain indications of a later age, points met in this commentary: but the connection of thought appears to be satisfactorily shewn in the preceding analysis and in the notes; and as for the style, few who have an ear for the resonance and grandeur of ancient Hebrew poetry, will dissent from the judgment of M. Renan, "le style est celui des meilleurs endroits du poème. Nulle part

la coupe n'est plus vigoureuse, le parallélisme plus sonore."

4. By far the most serious objection is that which touches the discourse of Elihu. In this case the difference of style is unquestionable; it is felt even in the translation, and is acknowledged by all critics. It affects the grammatical forms and the words, which, to a far greater extent than any portion of the book, are replete with indications of Aramaic or Chaldaic origin. This objection may be met by the probable supposition that the author of the book adhered faithfully to the form in which the dialogue was handed down by tradition. Elihu, an Aramean, would of course speak a language which differed in these characteristics from those of other speakers. It has been observed (by Schlottmann, p. 61) that the Chaldaic idioms, which are very unlike those of a later date, and occur only in highly poetic passages of very ancient writers, are peculiarly suitable in the discourse of a young and impassioned speaker: an observation which may be extended to an equally striking characteristic of the discourse, its excessive obscurity. A young man speaking in the presence of his superiors, and embarrassed by the struggle with new and overwhelming thoughts, labouring for utterance, might be expected to use arguments, which though ingenious and true, are intricate and imperfectly developed. These answers, though they may not remove the difficulty altogether, certainly diminish the force of the objection. Great stress again is laid upon the fact that Elihu is not mentioned either in the introduction, or at the close of the book, and that his arguments are left without answer or notice. It may be admitted that these facts supply a *primâ facie* argument for the assumption that the discourse was added at a later period, whether by a different writer, who felt that an important element in the discussion was lacking, or by the same author in his old age, as M. Renan thinks not improbable. Yet it is not difficult to account for both facts. No persons are named in this book until they take part in the transactions, or are otherwise concerned with the events. Thus Job's brethren are mentioned incidentally in one of his discourses, and his relatives for the first time in the concluding chapter. Elihu was a young man, not likely as such to be named among the elders who came to comfort Job; his speech was neither expected nor called for, nor was it uttered until all their arguments were exhausted. Job does not answer him, either because his own words were ended, or because he admits the cogency of the new arguments which Elihu adduces; if so, it would be a curious coincidence with his declaration early in the conference, that he would be silent if really taught and convinced; see ch. vi. 24, 25.

The question as to the genuineness of the discourse depends, to some extent, upon the view which the reader may take as to its value and importance. Some ancient and modern critics treat it contemptuously, and suppose that it was inserted only to enhance by contrast the effect of the last solemn discourse of Job: an opinion which seems to imply a very unfair estimate of the character and arguments of the speaker. On the other hand, many Hebrew writers, and some Fathers, as Chrysostom, regard him as a person of superior intellect, specially inspired, and a true exponent of the divine will; while critics of eminence, including some who regard the discourse as an interpolation, hold that it contains the true dialectic solution of the great problem set before us in the book. It is, however, argued, admitting that estimate of its value, that the doctrinal system of Elihu indicates a considerable advance beyond that of the other interlocutors, including Job himself, and must therefore belong to a later age. Yet in fact the position which Elihu takes differs rather in degree than in kind from that occupied, or suggested, in the preceding discourses; the difference is either one of development, as in the very beautiful representation of mediatorial agency, and the loving and instructive character of divine chastisements, or of personal application of those doctrines to the case of Job. On the other hand, it seems incredible that had Elihu's discourse been added afterwards, there should be no traces in it of doctrines which were undoubtedly taught at

the earliest period to which any critics assign the interpolation, doctrines, which, if known, would have suggested the strongest arguments for warning or consolation. No reader of the psalms and of the prophets could have failed under such circumstances to urge such topics as a future judgment, and the coming of the great Judge. Great weight must also be attached to the arguments of Schlottmann, who shews that there is a close internal connection between this and other parts of the book; that it abounds in references to passages in the discourses of Job and his friends; so covert as only to be discovered by close inquiry; yet when pointed out, so natural and striking, as to leave no place for reasonable doubt. Elihu, in fact, supplies just what Job had repeatedly called for, a confutation of his opinions, not effected by an overwhelming display of divine power, but by rational and human argument; such a confutation as would not, like the arguments of the other opponents, rest upon false, bigoted or hypocritical assertions, but would befit a truthful and candid reasoner. The reasonings of Elihu, moreover, are really needed for the full development of the subject-matter of the book, and yet they are such as could not, without irreverence, be attributed to Almighty God. It is satisfactory to state that critics who deny this to be an integral and original portion of the book, fully acknowledge its intrinsic worth.

§ 5. *Character of the Book.*

The most ancient if not universal opinion among Hebrews and Christians was that the persons and events described in this book are strictly historical, and that the very words of the speakers are accurately reported. It was believed again by the principal Rabbinical authorities, by the Syrian Fathers, and by many Greek ecclesiastical writers, that Moses wrote the introduction and closing chapters, and compiled the dialogue from documents with which he may have become acquainted during his residence in Midian. This opinion has been maintained by critics of eminence in modern times, by Huet, J. D. Michaelis, Jahn, Dr Lee, Dr Mill, and others.

The fact of Job's existence and the substantial truth of the narrative are undoubtedly assumed by the sacred writers; see Ezek. xiv. 14, 20, (where the statement is made by "the word of the Lord"), and James v. 11. It is also admitted (see Ewald, 'Einl.' p. 15), that the invention of a story without foundation in facts, the creation of a person represented as having a real historical existence, is wholly alien to the spirit of antiquity, appearing only in the latest epoch of literature of any ancient people, and belonging in its complete form to the most modern times. Were even such an invention conceivable, there are special reasons why a Hebrew should not have created such a character and such circumstances as are represented in this book. It sets forth, as a perfect model of excellence, a personage not descended from Abraham, and belonging to a race and country in no way associated with Israelitish history. It is a point upon which too much stress can scarcely be laid, that throughout the narrative and the dialogues there is a singular air of reality. The ablest critics of all schools, Ewald ('Einl.' p. 57), Renan, Hahn, Schlottmann and Delitzsch, are unanimous in bearing testimony to the fact, that in all the descriptions of manners and customs, domestic, social, and political, and even in the casual illustrations, the genuine colouring of the age of Job is faithfully observed; that the numerous allusions to historical events refer exclusively to patriarchal times; that there is a complete, and in their opinion an intentional and most skilful, avoidance of occurrences, such as must have been well known to a later writer. From the beginning to the end of the book no single reference is made to the Mosaic law; the very word law (Thorah), so common in every other book, more especially in those of the age, to which modern critics refer this work, occurs only once (xxii. 22), and then not in the special signification of a received code: the peculiar institutions of Israel, and the cardinal events of the national history after the Exodus, are wholly unnoticed. It should be borne in mind that no ancient writer ever succeeded in reproducing the manners of a past age, or in avoiding allusion to

those of his own: this is true even of the Greek dramatists, and indeed of writers of every country and age before the 18th century. The attempt indeed was not even made. To use M. Renan's words, p. xvi. "antiquity had not an idea of what we call local colouring." The age of any ancient writer can be positively determined, when we have a full and exact knowledge of the institutions and customs which he describes. All critics concur in extolling the fresh, antique simplicity of manners, the genuine air, the wild, free, vigorous life of the desert; and admit the contrast between the manners, thoughts, and feelings described in this book and those of the Israelites during the monarchical period. To this it must be added, that the effect of reality is produced by a number of internal indications which can scarcely be accounted for, save by a faithful adherence to objective truth. In all the characters there is a thorough consistency, each agent in the transaction has peculiarities of thought and feeling, which give him a distinct and vivid personality; this is more especially the case with Job himself, whose character is not merely drawn in broad outlines, but, like that of David and others, whose history is given with most detail in Scripture, is developed under a variety of most trying circumstances, presenting under each change new aspects, but ever retaining its peculiar and most living individuality. Even the language and illustrations of the several speakers have distinctive characteristics. The incidents, moreover, which in a fiction would probably have been noted in a vague and general manner, are narrated with minuteness and an accurate observance of local and temporary conditions. Thus, we remark the mode in which the supernatural visitation is carried into execution, by natural agencies, and under circumstances peculiar to the district, at a season when the inroads of Chaldean and Sabean robbers were customary and peculiarly dreaded; by fire and whirlwinds, such as occur at intervals in the desert; and, lastly, by elephantiasis, of which the symptoms are described so accurately as to leave no doubt that the writer must have recorded what he actually observed, unless indeed he inserted them with the special intention of giving an air of truthfulness to his composition. Were such a supposition in itself plausible, in this case it would be confuted by the fact that these symptoms are not described in any single passage, so as to attract the attention of the reader, but are made out by a critical and scientific examination of words occurring at distant intervals in the complaints of the sufferer. The most refined art could scarcely produce this result: it is rarely attempted, still more rarely, if ever, attained in the most artificial ages: it was never dreamed of by ancient writers, and must be regarded in this case as a strong instance of the undesigned coincidences, which sound criticism accepts as a sure attestation to the genuineness of a work.

Overlooking, or ignoring the force of these considerations, critics of eminence have maintained that the whole work is pure invention, a moral and religious apologue, others, with less improbability, suppose that upon a basis of facts preserved by tradition, the genius of an original and highly intellectual thinker has raised this monument, in which they recognize the loftiest and noblest product of Semitic genius; assigning to it in fact a rank among the few great masterpieces of the human mind.

The first trace of the former opinion, which was not likely to have occurred to an ancient Hebrew, is found in the Talmud. In a discussion between Samuel B. Nachmani, and Resh Lakish, the latter asserts, in opposition to the more distinguished and judicious critic, that "Job did not exist, and was not a created man, but is a mere parable[1]." The supposition does not appear to have been accepted by any Hebrews of eminence. The passage was altered by Hai Gaon[2] (A.D. 998—1038), who is followed by Rashi: "Job existed and was created in

[1] This opinion has been incorrectly assigned to Bar Nachmani himself; see the article on Job, Smith's 'Dict.' I. p. 1095. The error is corrected by Magnus, 'Comm.' p. 298, quoted by Bleek, 'Einl.' p. 649. The passage in question is in 'Bava Bathra,' 15, *a*.

[2] Gaon means excellent: it was a title of honour borne by a series of Rabbis, as Presidents of Academies, of whom this Hai was the last. See Jost, 'Judenthum,' II. pp. 248, 252, 291; and Kitto's Encyclopædia, s. v. Scribes, where a full account of them is given by Dr Ginsburg.

order to become a parable," *i.e.* the view and object of his existence was to bring into clearer light the meaning of divine dispensations. The change was certainly not justified on critical grounds, but bears strong testimony to the unvarying tradition of the Hebrews. Maimonides does not, as Bleek states, accept the view of Resh Lakish, but, with his characteristic freedom of spirit, looks upon it as an open question, of little moment as regards the religious import of the book, which he holds to be inspired. See 'More Nevochim,' III. 22[1].

The second opinion, which regards the work as in the main a product of creative genius, but resting on historical fact, appears to have originated with Luther, who says, "I look upon the book of Job as a true history, yet I do not believe that all took place just as it is written, but that a pious and learned man of genius brought it into its present form." 'Tischreden,' ed. Walsch, tom. XXII. p. 2003. On various grounds, and with considerable modifications, some reducing the historical element to a minimum, others giving it a preponderating share in the composition, this theory is held by the great majority of modern critics; the tendency to eliminate the historical or traditional element being most conspicuous among those scholars of France and Germany who look upon the work as one of the latest productions of Hebrew literature. The question is evidently bound up with the inquiry into the probable age and country of the writer; an inquiry of which the result will depend mainly upon the language, style, and doctrinal system.

§ 6. *Language.*

It is admitted on all hands that this book abounds in words and forms which are commonly known as Aramaic, found in the Syriac and Chaldee languages, of which it is well known that the influence was first perceptible about the time of the Babylonish captivity. This applies not only to the speech of Elihu which has been previously considered, but, though in a less degree, more or less to all the discourses; not least to those which bear the strongest marks of antiquity and must be held to belong to the original structure of the composition. On this ground mainly, some critics have assigned the whole work to the period after the captivity; but the answer which has been already given in the case of Elihu may be repeated with more entire confidence with reference to all other portions. The Aramaisms of late Hebrew writers differ essentially from those which occur in this book. The latter are, with scarcely an exception, such as characterize the archaic or highly poetic style. They occur in parts of the Pentateuch, in the song of Deborah, and in the earliest psalms. They are, in fact, of a character which can only be accounted for either on the supposition that the writer studiously adopted them in order to give an antique colouring to his composition—an expedient which belongs to an artificial time, and is not lightly to be assumed in any work before the Ptolemaic age—or that they are genuine and natural indications of hoar antiquity.

But though occurring frequently, Aramaisms are not the only, or the most characteristic peculiarities of the language of Job. It was long since remarked by Jerome that it approaches more nearly to the Arabic than to any other production of the Hebrews. Schultens demonstrated this fact to the satisfaction of all scholars, and rendered a most essential service to scientific philology by an immense collection of illustrations and etymologies derived from Arabian writers[2]. He considered that the best account of this fact is that the work must have been written, substantially in the form which is now before us, at a very early period, before the different branches of the Semitic race

[1] The only part which he really holds to be parabolical, or figurative, is the colloquy in heaven.

[2] The Rabbis of the 11th century, many of whom wrote Arabic, with which they were not less conversant than with their native language, devoted special attention to the obscure words of Job, of which they found the best explanation in Arabic. Thus Aben Ezra in his Commentary on Job, "obscuras voces in Arabismo explicat." See Vitæ celebr. Rabbinorum in Reland's 'Analecta Rabbinica,' p. 60. Aben Ezra observes on ch. ii. 11, "The sages of blessed memory say that Moses wrote Job, but it seems to me more probable that the book is a translation, for which reason it is difficult and irregular in style, as is the case of all translations."

had completely formed their separate dialects. Critics admit, as a scientific fact, that all those dialects had a common origin, and that in the original language peculiarities existed, which cropped up here and there at later periods, retained in the vernacular language of the common people, or occasionally brought out in the excitement of poetic inspiration, atavisms, so to speak, attesting a common ancestry. It is moreover evident that the descent of Job, and the geographical position of the districts inhabited by him and the interlocutors in the dialogue, would account naturally both for the Aramaic and Arabic colouring. But critics might say, with Wenrich ('De origine et causis Poeseos Hebraicæ,' 1843, p. 20), "Haud quidem negamus, idiomata Semitica antiquissimis temporibus, quibus a communi matre haud multum distabant, propius ad se invicem accessisse: at vero propinquitatis illius nullum ad nostra tempora superavit monumentum." That objection has been cleared away by the very latest, and in this and many other respects, most important discovery of Semitic archæology. The Moabitic stone proves that the descendants of Lot spoke a language differing from the Hebrew in dialectic peculiarities, but so nearly identical with it that the natives of Moab and Palestine would be mutually intelligible without the need of an interpreter. It proves, moreover, what had previously been a matter of conjecture[1], that the language was written in characters common to the Phœnicians and all branches of the Semitic race. The decipherment presented not the smallest difficulty to archæologists; and notwithstanding the lamentable damage to the stone, the interpretation of the whole document is not open to serious question. No one supposes that this substantial identity of language was the result of later intercourse between the two nations: we have therefore a substantial proof that the descendants of the common stock, after an interval of more than a thousand years, could not only understand each other's language, but read each other's productions. It is evident that the argument would be stronger were it assumed that this book became known to the Hebrews at a far earlier period in their history; even at the period when Moses dwelt in Midian, when he wrote the Pentateuch in a language, in a style, and probably also in characters which were common to the Semitic race.

Nor is this impression weakened when we consider the style of Job. All critics recognize its grand, archaic character. Firm, compact, sonorous as the ring of pure metal, severe and at times rugged, yet always dignified and majestic, the style belongs essentially to a period when thought was slow, and labouring for utterance, but profound and intensely concentrated, full of weighty and oracular sayings, such as were fit to be engraved upon rocks with a pen of iron and in characters of molten lead. It is a lapidary style, so to speak, such as might befit an age and country when writing, though known, was not commonly used, when language full of life and power had not as yet attained to the clearness, fluency and flexibility which characterize a later age, most especially that which some modern critics would assign to this work. It is well known that the style of Job is peculiar for obscurities of expression far beyond any other Hebrew writing. Obscurity which proceeds from confusion of thought may merely indicate a feeble writer, or when resulting, as is especially the case with Arabic and Hebrew writers of later date[2], from artificial combinations, studied antitheses and involved construction of sentences, it may prove that the writer belongs to a period of declining taste, of decadence and decay; but when it is owing to obsolete words occurring in sentences otherwise remarkable for simplicity and natural grace, or to intense concentration of thought and language, or to incidental allusions to long forgotten traditions, obscurity is an all but infallible proof of antiquity. Such are precisely the causes of that obscurity which affects every chapter of the book, and is attested

[1] See 'Mélanges d'Archéologie orientale, par le Comte de Vogüé,' 1868, pp. 89 and 139.

[2] *E.g.* in the later chapters of Ecclesiastes, in other writings of the same period, and certainly in the apocryphal books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus and Baruch. In Arabic, Arabshah, Motanebbi and Hariri shew the development of this tendency, which in their works goes beyond the extravagances of Lycophron.

by the immense mass of conflicting interpretations, which after centuries of labour leave numerous passages involved in darkness, notwithstanding the grand simplicity of the leading thoughts.

Nor is much weight to be attached to the argument that a poem so perfect in design, and so grand in execution, implies a previous degree and kind of culture which is not compatible with the age and circumstances of Job. We have sufficient proof that compositions of considerable extent were actually engraved on stone at a period which all critics admit to be far more ancient than Moses. This has been shown in the Introductions to the Pentateuch and Exodus; and these compositions, moreover, are metrical, an observation which is still more applicable to papyri[1] of extreme antiquity. We know indeed nothing from external sources of early Semitic composition, whether in prose or poetry, which could justify us in attributing a corresponding progress to patriarchal times; but it has been long since remarked that the very simple and natural laws of metre, if metre it may be called, which pervade all Hebrew poetry, are equally conspicuous in those relics of primeval antiquity which the writer of the Pentateuch has interwoven in his great work[2]. The subdivision into clauses of nearly equal length, the repetition or variation of a thought in these clauses, involve no serious exertion of intellect, and were probably all but contemporaneous with the formation of each dialect, or with that stage in its formation which was certainly attained in the so-called patriarchal age. And it should be remarked that, while we have in the book of Job a singularly strict observance of these laws, so strict as to be paralleled only in the poems which the Bible attributes to the age of Moses, or to the period before David, we have on the one hand no certain indications of that arrangement into measured stanzas or strophes which characterizes the book of psalms: where such an arrangement appears to exist it is the result, not of attention to poetic rule, but of the natural sequence and pauses of thought. On the other hand, the combination of varied cadences and sentences of unequal length and different structure, which gives so peculiar a charm to the poetry of the great prophets, is wholly absent from this book[3].

But above all, a fact should be borne in mind which seems in this case to be strangely overlooked by modern critics, that power, originality, deep insight into the very springs of human thought, and vivid representation of objective realities, have ever been the special characteristics of the earliest developments of national genius. Just so much of previous preparation as is indicated in the notices of the Pentateuch may be required, and would suffice, to produce the greatest poets, the master genius of any race. Homer had no predecessor, no rival among his followers; sovra gli altri come aquila vola. Dante stands alone in Italy; the first who used the Italian language for poetry drew out and exhausted its capabilities, and left no region of thought or feeling unexplored. And were we to admit on other grounds the probability that the woes of Job, the utterances which stirred, as none have ever stirred

[1] Such, for instance, as the Hymn to the Nile; the poem of Pentaour in the select papyri, Sallier 2 and 3; and the Litany to the Sun in the 15th chapter of the Egyptian Ritual: see Maspero, 'Hymne au Nil;' and 'Traduction comparée des Hymnes au Soleil,' par E. Lefébure, 1868.

[2] Wenrich, l.c. draws from this fact an argument against the pre-Mosaic origin of those relics; but the converse of the argument may be confidently maintained. See Ewald, 'Die Dichter des A. B.' I. p. 24.

[3] The difference is the same in kind, though not in degree, as that between the uniform metre of the Homeric poems and the complicated forms of lyric and dramatic poetry. The attempt to divide the discourses into strophes has been made by some commentators, following the principles first laid down broadly by Köster; but a comparison of the results goes far to prove that in the greater portion of the work little reliance can be placed upon their conclusions. With the exception of discourses, in which descriptions and statements fall naturally into clauses of equal length, no two critics agree in their arrangement. Ewald asserts truly that no discourse from ch. iv. to xxxi. has regular strophes throughout: 'Heb. Dicht.' I. p. 195. Dr Merx, in his commentary lately published, has bestowed great pains upon this matter, and makes a considerable number of conjectural emendations in order to sustain his theory. The question will be fully considered in the Introduction to the Book of Psalms: here it may suffice to state that the writer adheres to the opinion expressed above.

more powerfully, the vibrating chords of emotion, were recorded, or wrought into a perfect whole by one man, and that man belonging to the same race and living at no remote interval from the patriarch's time, we should assuredly not be justified in discarding that theory, because, like Moses himself, he rose at once to the highest sphere of human thought. What would indeed be without parallel, or justification on critical grounds, would be to attribute such a production to an age, in which occasional gleams of genius, fitful and transient, alone shewed that the Israelite retained the powers which distinguished his great forefathers. The higher the estimate which may be formed of the genius of this writer,—and that estimate rises higher in proportion to the keenness and earnestness of criticism,—the more forcible will be the inference that he belongs to the remotest past.

§ 7. *Comparison with other Hebrew writings.*

One of the most important points in determining the age in which this book was either written or first made known, whether by translation or simple transcription, is not perhaps capable of exact demonstration, but arguments of considerable force may be adduced in favour of an early date. The point to which we allude is the comparison of the book with Hebrew writings of which the date is known. There are an immense number of passages in Job which bear so close a resemblance in thought and in language to books of every date, from the Pentateuch to the close of the Canon, as to make it certain that they must have been derived from a common source. As a *prima facie* argument, it may be reasonably maintained that of two alternatives, one of which would make this book little more than a cento of fragments artificially interwoven, while the other accounts for the resemblance by the influence which a work of transcendant genius and unparalleled interest would naturally and necessarily exercise, the latter is, to say the least, far more probable, considering the striking originality and unity, both of purpose and of style, which are recognized by all critics. But the question cannot be answered completely without an exhaustive comparison of the passages. This would require a separate treatise, and open discussions of extreme difficulty; but some general results may suffice for our purpose. In the first place, all passages written from the time of Jeremiah onwards are *certainly* posterior to the composition, and general circulation, of the book of Job. It is scarcely open to doubt that the passage in Jeremiah xx. 14—18 is derived from Job iii. 3—12. In Job, the words exactly befit the occasion, are natural even in their exaggeration, and bear the liveliest impress of the writer's genius. In Jeremiah they occur abruptly, as it were a sudden reminiscence of another's words, adapted to the prophet's own circumstances: this adaptation is a well-known characteristic of Jeremiah, who may seem to have had a special mission thus to set his seal upon the inspiration of older writings. The argument is confirmed by the mention of Job in Ezekiel, ch. xiv., which shows that the book was so well known in the prophet's time that an admonition addressed to the 'house of Israel' could be enforced by a reference to the character of Job, as an example of tried righteousness, and of effectual intercession.

The question touching the resemblance with the earlier Psalms, the Proverbs, and other productions of the period, extending from Solomon to Josiah, is more difficult[1]. Yet it may be shewn that the resemblance is most striking in those passages of the Hebrew writers which bear the strongest impress of archaic character. This is specially the case with the Proverbs, to which it is

[1] Attention has been called to this point by references throughout the commentary. The passages in which the words or thoughts are identical, or so nearly resembling each other as to leave no doubt of their common origin, are so numerous that even the copious selections by Dr Lee and Bishop Wordsworth scarcely produce the full effect which results from continuous comparison. Ewald in the Introduction to Proverbs, p. 38, points out that passages which he holds to be of later date bearing upon the objects of divine chastisements are evidently drawn from the book of Job: but references equally clear occur in what that critic regards as the most ancient portion of the book of Proverbs, sc. x. 1.—xxii. 16.

admitted that the book of Job bears a far closer affinity in style and in modes of thought than to any portion of the Old Testament. Now nothing could be more natural than that Solomon, as a compiler of ancient sayings, and a student of all forms of thought which come within his cognizance, and who encouraged intercourse with foreign nations, should select or adapt numerous sentences from this book, of which even the outward form and metrical system were such as would harmonize readily with the form in which his own thoughts were expressed. And it is certain that the description of the Divine Wisdom, Proverbs viii., in which the Salomonian theory culminated, is founded upon the xxviiith of Job, with which it agrees in all substantial points, and in the whole tone of thought and of expression, whereas it differs from it in details which belong to a later age (*e. g.* viii. 34, ix. 1—5), more especially in the vivid personification which develops the thought of Job: compare Prov. viii. 1—10 and 30—35, with Job xxviii. 12 and 28.

The points of contact with the Psalms are exceedingly numerous; but it may be shown that the style of those chapters of Job, in which the resemblance is nearest, differs in no respect from that of other portions, and that in no case is there any indication of a strained application, whereas in the Psalms the variety of style is so great as to have induced modern critics generally to assume a plurality of authors, even in reference to those psalms which are distinctly attributed to David, and on other grounds are unassailable. It is evident that the writer of one of the books was so thoroughly intimate with the older composition, whichever that may have been, that he unconsciously for the most part, or sometimes it would seem designedly, reproduced the language, the sentiments, and even the doctrinal statements or speculative inquiries of his predecessor. In both the language is at once so vigorous and so natural as to remove all suspicion of artificial adaptation, and therefore to make it well nigh impossible to determine the priority without reference to other considerations.

Of these considerations the most important, and the most readily determined, touch the state of development of doctrine and speculation in Job, compared with that of the Psalms and the prophetic books.

On comparing the passages which speak of the state after death, we find one general resemblance. In none are there distinct proofs or unquestionable traces of an objective revelation. Man's spirit struggles with the mystery of existence, left, as it would seem, intentionally to its own inherent and ineradicable instincts, and groping its way darkly, it may be as a preparation for the future manifestation of life and immortality in Christ. But the passages in Job amount to little more than a yearning, an earnest longing for a vindication of his own righteousness, and of the divine justice, such as would be wholly impossible without a restoration of personal consciousness, or even personal integrity, and a futurity of judgment and retribution. It is evidently the first attempt to deal with the problem, which after all it leaves unsolved: since the confident anticipation of Job does not affect his own deliberate judgment, is not noticed by other interlocutors, and is not confirmed by the Divine Word. But the words of the Psalmist have a very different character. He knows that God will not leave his soul in Sheol, that when he awakes he will be satisfied with God's likeness, that the righteous will have dominion over the wicked in the morning, that at the right hand of God are pleasures for evermore[1]. The aspiration of Job may have given the impulse, and even suggested the forms of expression, but in the Psalmist it is become a lively and sure hope, amounting, though as yet without external support, to a subjective certainty. It is scarcely necessary to extend this comparison to the prophets, in whom denunciations of the future judgment of the wicked, and assurances of the eternal triumph of the just, become gradually clearer and more definite, until they issue in the hope of a bodily resurrection.

It has been argued that the representation of angels in Job indicates a later

[1] For an examination of these passages and of the dates of the psalms in which they occur, see notes on the Book of Psalms.

age. The possibility of their fall is intimated, and, what is even more remarkable, traces of imperfection or frailty are noted as inherent in their nature. Although supplication addressed to them is not encouraged, and indeed assumed to be unavailing, it is contemplated as possible (see v. 1); and the mediation and intercession of one angel is recognized, though only in the discourse of Elihu. The position of Satan is also regarded by many as confirming this general impression.

But each of these points carefully considered tells in the opposite direction. The fall of the angels, though not directly stated, is certainly assumed, in the most ancient notices of the Pentateuch, and is inseparable from the account of man's temptation and fall. The notices of frailty in those angels who stand around God's throne are altogether peculiar to this book: nothing at all corresponding to them occurs in any of the later books of the Old Testament, certainly not in Daniel or in Zechariah, where the nature and offices of angels are most fully set forth. So far as these notices suggest any argument it would be in favour of the independence of purely Hebrew tradition, and therefore of patriarchal antiquity. Nor, again, are there any traces of prayer addressed to angels in Hebrew writings, within any period which critics would assign to the book of Job. That such a practice should have prevailed among some families connected with that of Abraham is far from improbable: indeed, the entire suppression of angel worship would seem to be peculiar to the Hebrews: a fact the more remarkable since the mediation, the guidance and protection, and the constant ministrations of the Great Angel, are conspicuous features in the notices of the Patriarchal age[1]. The representation of Satan harmonizes indeed, as might be expected, with that of other inspired writers, yet it has this peculiarity: the word is not yet a proper name, but is used simply in the sense of the adversary: in later books it is a recognized designation of the Fiend. It is also a peculiarity that Satan in this book moves[2] God directly, but is not represented as tempting man by internal or spiritual suggestion. He executes his malignant purposes under the control and by the permission of the Almighty; but all the trial, so far as Satan is concerned, is external. Nor, again, does Satan, as in the Psalms and Zechariah iii. 1, stand at the right hand of Job as the accuser, but appears only in the court of heaven as the calumniator of Job. The comparison with those views of Satanic agency which later Hebrews are assumed to have derived from Persian sources, is simply absurd in its application to this book. The Agramainyus of the Avesta bears no resemblance to Satan in position or power in relation to the universe or to God. That myth belongs to a theory of the world of which there are no traces in this book; which indeed is in direct opposition to the teaching of Job, with whom the great and unsolved difficulty is to reconcile the existence of physical and moral evil with the absolute and exclusive supremacy of God.

Nor does the inquiry into other religious or ethical points lead to a different conclusion. The morality of Job agrees, of course, in its fundamental principles with that of the Pentateuch and all inspired writers, but it is wholly independent of the institutions of Mosaism; it is thoroughly patriarchal, as may be seen more especially in that very complete account of his own past life given by Job in his last discourse: its chief characteristic being a simple and earnest desire to live in harmony with God's spiritual law, and, above all, a purity of life including not merely abstinence from practices common, and scarcely condemned by public opinion in Palestine, but strict self-control and watchfulness over the inlets to subtle temptation, such as we do not find in the same degree or form until it was inculcated by our Lord. (See notes on ch. xxxi.) Similar characteristics mark the notices of religious observance. Idolatry, in the forms prevalent under the kings of Israel, is not noticed as a possible temptation; it is not suggested

[1] See *e.g.* Gen. xxi. 17, xxii. 11 xxviii. 12, xlviii. 16, and especially note on Gen. xii. 7.

[2] See note on ii. 3: the word implies temptation.

by the accusers of Job, nor by Satan when urging the trial, nor by any of the interlocutors who exhaust all the conjectures by which they can account for such unparalleled sufferings. The one temptation which Job himself recognizes as imaginable, is that of secret enticement to a gesture of adoration addressed to the heavenly luminaries (xxxi. 26—28), a form of worship of which the existence is attested by monuments far more ancient than Job: that he considers would have been a sin calling for judgment, and equivalent to denial of God. At every period in the history of the Israelites such worship was associated with idolatry of the grossest character, such as one and all the prophets of Israel denounce, such as if known or practised in Job's time would assuredly have supplied allusions or arguments to himself and his friends.

Taking all the ascertained facts into consideration, it may be confidently maintained, that whether the writer of the book were a Palestinian Hebrew or not, he must have lived at a time, and under circumstances, which either kept him in ignorance of the institutions peculiar to Mosaism, or made him to a most remarkable extent independent of their influence. The hypothesis, which on the whole seems least encumbered with difficulties, is that the work was written in the country of Job, probably by one of his descendants, but certainly after a considerable interval of time, the patriarch being evidently represented as belonging to another age, his own life extending to the fourth generation (xlii. 16) of children born after his deliverance. It may be questioned whether the book was first made known in the time of Moses, a suggestion to which great weight must be attached, considering the similarity of style in the prose narration, and numerous coincidences of thought and expression between the discourses and the lyric or rhetorical portions of the Pentateuch. Such indeed is the deliberate opinion of critics of great eminence, well defended by Dr Mill, Dr Lee, and others, who hold that Moses became acquainted with the work when residing in Midian, a view which accords with the earliest tradition of the Hebrews, and has no internal improbability for those who accept the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. The supposition, however, that we owe the book in its actual form to a writer of the Salomonian period, has much in its favour; assuming, that is, that he used copious materials, existing in a dialect so nearly allied to the Hebrew as to require little more than occasional glosses, and some revision of grammatical forms and construction. This hypothesis meets in fact many difficulties. The close resemblance in language, which has been previously noticed, would be a natural result of familiarity with the Psalms of David and other products of Hebrew genius, which must have had an irresistible attraction for a man who could enter into the mind of Job and clothe his thoughts in living utterances. Nor can any age after the settlement in Palestine be pointed out in which there is an equal probability that a Hebrew would have a desire to make himself acquainted with the abstruse and fearless speculations of foreign thinkers. At a later period the enmity between the Israelites and their neighbours, those, especially, among whom this work, if of foreign origin, must have been produced, would have made such an attempt all but impossible. It is equally unlikely that an Israelite in the time of the judges, or of the later kings, should have presented to his countrymen a perfect model of goodness in the person of an alien, whether that person were a pure creation of genius, or one whose acts and words lived in the memory and were preserved in the records of his own race. The supposition which of late has found most favour with critics, rests to a great extent upon a recognition of the force of these considerations. It is admitted that the style is so thoroughly impregnated with Aramaic and Arabic idioms that the writer must have lived at a distance from Jerusalem, and in a district bordering on countries where Syriac and Arabic were spoken. This would, as we have endeavoured to shew above, point naturally to the Hauran: but the claims of the southern district of Judæa have been advocated with ingenuity and force[1]. It is pointed out that the inhabitants of

[1] *e.g.* by Stickel, Vaihinger, Schlottmann, and Dillmann.

that district were in close contact with Edom: that they had special opportunities of acquiring much of the varied knowledge which is strikingly characteristic of this book: the caravans of Sheba and Tema would pass through the neighbouring country, on a route early frequented by merchants: there was frequent intercourse with Egypt, which the writer certainly knew well, either by report, or more probably by personal observation; they appear also to have lived even to a late age, very much after the manner of the patriarchs, and were of course familiar with the free, vigorous life of the adjoining desert: some stress is also laid upon the remarkable coincidences between passages in Job and in the work of Amos, the herdsman of Tekoah (Schlottmann compares Amos iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 16; with Job ix. 8, 9, xxviii. 31, xii. 15); these are naturally explained if both writers belonged to the same district; the inhabitants are also supposed, though on no very conclusive grounds, to have been famed for freshness and originality of genius. Some dialectic peculiarities, the softening of aspirates and exchanges of sibilants, which are found in Job, appear to belong to southern Palestine. The point of most importance, were it sufficiently authenticated, would seem to be that the inhabitants of that district were to a considerable extent isolated from the rest of the nation; and that their attendance at the festivals and ordinances of the tabernacle, and until the date of the later kings, of the temple, was probably rare and irregular, if not entirely suspended, during a long period. So much weight must certainly be attached to these considerations and to the authority of the critics, as to justify us in admitting the possibility, that a writer living in that country, and at a period when the Mosaic code was little known, and the institutions had obtained but a partial acceptance, could have produced the work in its actual form; but every argument thus adduced tells more forcibly in favour of the hypothesis that he was rather its transcriber or translator than its originator. That he should not introduce into the work of another allusions to facts and doctrines of a later age, is perfectly conceivable; that he should reproduce in vivid language, imagery and feelings harmonizing with his own experience, is quite natural; that in preparing the work for the use of Hebrews he should adopt the forms of expression in which the psalmist and prophets had clothed their thoughts, might be expected: but it appears, notwithstanding all that can be alleged, at once contrary to experience and to the surest canons of criticism, to assume that a devout Israelite should studiously and systematically avoid all reference to events, institutions, and doctrines which were the peculiar glory of Israel, and must have come home most nearly to the heart of a man labouring with such thoughts, and conversant with such speculations, as those which characterize the book of Job.

To the list of writers and commentators on Job given in the article on Job in Smith's Dictionary, are to be added the names of Dr Wordsworth Bishop of Lincoln, Magnus, Davison, and Dillmann, in the third edition of this portion of the 'Exegetisches Handbuch.' Dillmann follows the earlier commentaries of L. Hirzel and J. Olshausen, but abounds in new and valuable matter. The name of De Wette was given in that article by a mistake of the printer for Welte. In the following commentary the main object has been to bring out clearly the general course and connection of thought, and to present the reader with the results of critical examination of the translation. It would have required a very considerable space to give the processes by which those results are attained; and it has only been attempted in cases where the rendering and interpretation differ from those commonly adopted, or have a direct and important bearing upon the argument. The reader will find the most compact, and on the whole the most satisfactory summary of modern criticism in the commentaries of H. A. Hahn, 1850, and Dillmann.

This Introduction and the following notes were printed, but not finally revised, when the writer received a work on Job (published this year, 1871), by Dr Adalbert Merx, a well known Oriental scholar. It contains a Hebrew text, with translation, critical notes, and introduction. The principal object of Dr Merx is a reconstruction of the text,

founded chiefly on the authority of the Septuagint: the text which he presents differs throughout, and in some passages very widely, from the Masoretic, *i.e.* the textus receptus. Dr Merx has done good service, although many of his notes are rather conspicuous for boldness and ingenuity than for sound judgment. In some striking instances the clear canons laid down by the critic himself are disregarded; the authority of MSS. and ancient versions being set aside when the results do not accord with his general views. In revising the proof sheets notice has been taken of the points in his work which are interesting for their novelty or important for their bearings upon the interpretation.

THE BOOK OF JOB.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The holiness, riches, and religious care of Job for his children.* 6 *Satan, appearing before God, by calumniation obtaineth leave to tempt Job.* 13 *Understanding of the loss of his goods and children, in his mourning he blesseth God.*

THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was [a]perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

2 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

3 His [1]substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen,

[a] chap. 2. 3.

[1] Or, cattle.

1—3. The first three verses describe the position of Job, his country, name, character, family, and possessions.

1. *Uz*] A district peopled by the descendants of Uz. Three patriarchs bear this name: a son of Aram, Gen. x. 23; a son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, Gen. xxii. 21; and a grandson of Seir, the Horite, Gen. xxxvi. 28. The second of these probably gave the name to this country: the Chaldeans, Buzites, and indeed all the persons and tribes mentioned in the book of Job, belong to the same race; being either collateral or direct descendants from Abraham, and for the most part retaining the old patriarchal habits and traditions. The district (LXX. Αὐσῖτις) is generally identified with that occupied by the Æsitæ, which lay to the north-east of Idumæa, and appears to have been nearly co-extensive with Bathanyeh, or East Hauran, once a rich and fertile country. This is now generally regarded as the true home of Job. It is recognized by ancient and local tradition; a monastery there is called Deir Eyoub, *i.e.* the convent of Job: and it agrees with the indications of locality and customs which occur in the book. See Wetzstein's treatise, appended to the commentary of Delitzsch. A wealthy chieftain in that district might combine the free, frank habits of an Arabian sheikh with much of the culture of the cities in the vicinity, which in the earliest ages were remarkable for civilization; the caravans which passed regularly through the adjoining district would extend his view to remote countries, and bring an inquiring mind within reach of the marvellous results of Egyptian culture, which are evidently familiar to the writer, and to those whose acts and words he records.

Job] The derivation of the name is uncertain. According to most interpreters it means "hated, persecuted;" others, with less probability, derive it from an Arabic word signifying "penitent." It may, however, be unconnected with the events related in this book, and purely historical. It was borne by a son of Issachar, Gen. xlvi. 13, and very closely resembles the name Jobab, a descendant of Esau, with whom our Patriarch has been identified by early tradition. It appears to be the same name as that of Juba, the famous Mauritanian prince, who is called Jobas by Greek writers. Both forms are probably derived from a word signifying jubilant exultation, and express the joy of a noble family at the birth of an heir. See Note below.

perfect, &c.] These epithets, which are ratified by the word of the Almighty (see *v.* 8 and ch. ii. 3), give a complete view of Job's character. The words "perfect" (*i.e.* single-hearted, Aq. ἁπλοῦς, Wickliffe, simple, not wilfully or consciously committing sin; see note on Gen. xvii. 1, and ch. ix. 20, where it is opposed to "perverse"); and "upright" (a word which exactly represents the original) describe him in his relations to man: the other words go to the source of his goodness, an inward abiding sense of God's holiness, attested by abhorrence of evil. Cf. Gen. vi. 9: and compare the testimony borne to two representatives of the Gentiles in the N. T. by our Lord, Matt. viii. 10, 11; and by the Angel of the Lord, Acts x. 2—4.

2. *seven sons*, &c.] The numbers in this part of the narrative are significant, representing the completeness of God's providential gifts: but striking coincidences between outward facts and ideal numbers are not uncommon in the purely historical portions of Scripture.

3. *substance*] Or, **cattle**, as in the marg. The word so rendered always means live-stock. Job's wealth was not that of a mere dweller in the wilderness. His residence was stationary, he must have had rich pastures for

and five hundred she asses, and a very great [1] household; so that this man was the greatest of all the † men of the east.

[1] Or, *husbandry*. † Heb. *sons of the east.*

4 And his sons went and feasted *in their* houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

5 And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings *according* to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and [b] cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job † continually.

6 ¶ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and † Satan came also † among them.

[b] 1 Kings 21. 10, 13. † Heb. *all the days.* † Heb. *the adversary.* † Heb. *in the midst of them.*

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his sheep, and a vast extent of arable land. At present the wealth of a Hauranite is estimated by the number of feddans (a space that can be tilled by a yoke of two oxen) he can plough: five yoke of oxen imply station and opulence, the possessor of five hundred yoke would be a great prince. See Ritter, 'Syria,' p. 992. The absence of horses should be noted; it proves that Job was not a marauder: horses were then used exclusively for war.

household] This is probably more correct than "husbandry," as in the marg., which here and in Gen. xxvi. 14 follows the Targ. and LXX. The household consisted of numerous dependents (to whom frequent allusions are made), employed chiefly in out-door works, or as guards against the nomad tribes, who then, as in all ages, overran the country (see Wetzstein, *l.c.* p. 520). The Hauran is now called the paradise of the Bedouins, who in the course of ages of Turkish misrule have reduced it to a wilderness.

men of the east] Or, as in the marg., sons of the east: a name specially given to the tribes between Palestine and the Euphrates. It corresponds to Saracens, *i.e.* children of the morning, from the Arabic "sherk," early dawn.

4. *went*] Or, "were used to go." It was their custom.

their houses] Each son had his own residence, the daughters lived of course with their parents.

his day] It is doubtful whether this means "his birthday" (as iii. 1), or the day in each week which came to him in order; most probably the latter (see *v.* 5): it implies that the whole family lived in habits of frank, brotherly intercourse. The presence of the sisters, sanctioned by the parents, proves that there could be no excess in their enjoyment: but we find no traces of asceticism in the early traditions of the Semites. God's gifts were thankfully used without a suspicion of wrong, though not without a consciousness of the danger of misuse. It is noticeable that Job did not join the festivities which he watched with anxiety.

5. *the days*] The seven days, one for each son.

sent and sanctified them] This probably means that he sent for them, and caused them to perform the ceremonial ablutions, which were customary before offering any sacrifice. The whole family thus assembled weekly at their father's house to take part in the religious service. Job was his own priest. The priesthood was inherent in the head of the family, as the highest function of fatherhood. In this book there is no trace of the separation of the priesthood, or of the establishment of a sacerdotal caste: we are thus, as in all other references to customs, brought into contact with patriarchal usage.

burnt offerings] The only form of sacrifice known to the Patriarchs. See Gen. viii. 20. The whole victim was consumed by fire, a perfect holocaust, representing the absolute right of God over His creatures, and the absolute surrender of the creature's self. The original word means "ascending offering;" the victim went up, so to speak, to heaven in flame and smoke. See Introduction to Leviticus, §§ XII. and XIV.

cursed] Or, renounced. The word so rendered means properly "blessed;" but there is no doubt that in this and some other passages (*v.* 11, and ii. 5; see note on 1 K. xxi. 10) it is taken in a secondary sense, if not in that of "cursing," which is scarcely conceivable in the case of members of a pious family, yet in that of saying unto God, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," xxi. 14; a temptation to which Job may have feared that his children were exposed in the midst of sensuous enjoyments. The word, however, wherever it is so used, is evidently emphatic, and indicates the great danger and guilt of such forgetfulness. A similar usage is found in classical writers (Eurip. 'Hipp.' 113; very frequently in Plato), and is not unknown to our own language. See Note below.

continually] **all the days**, as in the marg. After each festive meeting.

6—12. The transactions in the spiritual world which issued in the trial of Job.

6. *there was a day*] **Now it was the day**, *i.e.* the day on which the angels were

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From [c]going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

[c] 1 Pet. 5. 8

8 And the LORD said unto Satan, [†]Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

† Heb. *Hast thou set thy heart on.*

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his [1]substance is increased in the land.

1 Or, *cattle.*

11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, [†]and he will curse thee to thy face.

† Heb. *if he curse thee not to thy face.*

12 And the LORD said unto Satan,

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summoned, periodically as it would seem, to appear before God.

the sons of God] This appellation occurs in Gen. vi. 2 (where see note), and in this book, xxxviii. 7. Here there can be no doubt it means spiritual beings, who were called into existence before the creation of the material universe (see ch. xxxviii. 7), and are constantly employed in executing the will of God. Cf. Ps. ciii. 20.

to present themselves] The representation is symbolical: like the ministers and agents of an earthly sovereign the powers of the universe are responsible to God for their proceedings, and have to give account of all transactions in His dominions. Cf. Zech. vi. 5.

Satan] The marginal rendering, "the adversary," is correct, and calls attention to the fact, that in this passage the word Satan is not used (as in 1 Chron. xxi. 1) as a proper name. It corresponds exactly to "the accuser," Rev. xii. 10. Though malignant and evil this spirit is evidently counted among the angels by origin and nature. He comes among them as one of their order. His presence is evidently expected and recognized. Like them he has to give an account of what he has observed. This representation is in accordance with other notices in the Bible; see *e.g.* 1 K. xxii. 19—22; Zech. iii. 1, 2; Apoc. xii. 9. The existence of a malignant spirit, permitted to range the earth, tempting and calumniating God's rational creatures, is implied or asserted in all Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. There is no ground for the assumption that the notion was derived from foreign sources. Unlike the Ahriman (Agra-mainyus) of the Persians (see Introd. § 7, and 'Vendidad,' I. 7, p. 61, ed. Spiegel), Satan is altogether subject to God, acts only permissively, and by his acts brings the cause of truth into stronger relief. It is to be observed that the final expulsion of this spirit from the higher region is represented in the New Testament as a result of the Saviour's coming. The mystery which hangs over such representations is common to all questions which concern the origin or continuance of moral evil.

among them] Maimonides notices this expression, as shewing that Satan came not as one of the sons of God, nor as bidden. 'Moreh Nevochim,' iii. c. XXII. St Augustine, Serm. 12, observes that he was then "sicut reus," which is not correct. St Gregory better, "venit ut videretur a Deo, non ut videret Deum." See Bp. Wordsworth.

7. *From going*, &c.] The former word implies rapid and extensive wandering, the latter repeated and careful observation. He goeth about seeking whom he may accuse, or tempt. See 1 Pet. v. 8.

8. *Hast thou considered*] Literally as in the marg. "set thy heart upon," but the text expresses the meaning. Thus Isa. xli. 22; Hag. i. 5, 7. The question implies that Satan's special work is to detect any flaws or unsoundness in human character.

my servant] No higher title of honour can be borne by man. This direct attestation of God to Job's character must be borne in mind throughout.

that there is] Rather, **for there is**, &c.

9. *for nought?*] The central point of the whole narrative is in this word. No flaw is discoverable in Job's outer life: Satan, wiser than Job's friends, sees and owns his integrity: the only possible objection touches the principle of his acts: the question raised is whether his goodness was disinterested, springing from pure love, or merely prudential, and dependent upon the external conditions under which it had been developed.

10. *on every side*] This refers to the first words, "Hast Thou not made a hedge on every side about him?"

substance] **Cattle**, as above, *v.* 3.

11. *touch*] Or **smite**. The Hebrew word implies the infliction of calamity, especially by God, thus Ps. lxxiii. 14; Isai. liii. 4.

and he will curse] The marginal rendering is preferable, (see) **if he will not renounce thee.**

to thy face] Openly, shamelessly, insolently.

Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy †power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

† Heb. hand.

13 ¶ And there was a day when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

15 And the Sabeans fell *upon them*, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

16 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, ‖The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

‖ Or, *A great fire.*

17 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and †fell upon the camels, and have carried

† Heb. *rushed.*

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12. *in thy power*] Or **hand**, as in the marg. This word is of importance in connection with the preceding verse; Satan said, "put forth Thy hand:" the answer is, "behold all that he has is in *thy* hand:" the physical evil thus takes place under God's control and by His will, but its infliction is committed to the agency of a malignant spirit; in this case it is permitted, being the only conceivable way in which the calumny could be confuted, and the inner goodness of God's servant vindicated. The object of Satan is to tempt Job; the permission is given in order to prove him, and at the same time to raise his spirit into a higher sphere of goodness.

13—22. The first series of trials and its results.

13. *in their eldest brother's house*] On the first day, therefore, of the weekly meetings, when Job might feel himself specially secure from heaven-sent inflictions, having that very morning sanctified his family, and offered an atonement for all known or unknown sins.

14. *were plowing*] Hence it appears that the feasting did not interrupt the usual routine of labour; this bears out the interpretation given in *v.* 4. It is important to observe that the ploughing determines very precisely the season of the transaction. In the Hauran this takes place in January. This may account for the very frequent allusions to wintry weather—cold, snow, ice, swollen streams, and violent storms—which occur throughout the book: a coincidence which has strangely escaped the notice of commentators. It is also to be remarked that all the oxen were at the same time in one district; this too is curiously confirmed by the present custom of the Hauran: in order to protect themselves from marauders the inhabitants plough the lands in succession, bringing all their oxen, with their guards, into the same district.

15. *the Sabeans*] Three races bearing this name are mentioned in Genesis, one descended from Cush, x. 7; one from Joktan, x. 28; and one from Abraham by Keturah, xxv. 3. The tribe here spoken of was evidently nomadic, prowling, like their descendants the Bedouins, over the districts to the north of Arabia. Strabo says of the Sabæans in southern Arabia, that although a rich mercantile people, they made incursions for plunder in Petræa and Syria. These may have been meant in this passage; Job's enemies were less likely to be found among neighbouring tribes.

16. *The fire of God*] Either brimstone and fire, as in Gen. xix. 24; cf. Ps. xi. 6; or lightning, see Ps. lxxviii. 48. This is a new and more terrible calamity. Incursions of robbers must have entered into the calculations of a rich chieftain in the Hauran, but a storm extending over the vast tracts occupied by 7000 sheep, and destroying them, together with their guards, would scarcely be attributed to merely natural causes, certainly not in that age by God-fearing men.

17. *The Chaldeans*] Or **Casdim**. The mention of Chaldeans has been assumed (by Ewald and Renan) to indicate a later date, since that people first became known to the Hebrews as a powerful and predatory race in the reign of Uzziah; but two ancient races bore that name; the one a Semitic tribe dwelling in the north of Assyria, the other in Mesopotamia; see Gen. xxii. 22, where Chesed and Uz are both named as children of Nahor. The former may be meant here: they were a warlike robber-race, who still retained their old seat and customs in the time of Xenophon, 'Anab.' IV. 3, § 5, &c. 'Cyrop.' III. 1, and are now represented by the Curds. The whole description here applies to an incursion of freebooters, rather than to the systematic invasions of a great empire. In the Egyptian 'Zeitschrift,' 1870, p. 151, it is stated that "about B.C. 1260, Semitic Casdim, or 'Conquerors,' from Assyria, took possession of the whole country, and esta-

them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

18 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

19 And, behold, there came a great wind [1]from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

[1] H. *from* [illegible] &c.

20 Then Job arose, and rent his [1]mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

[1] Or, *robe.*

21 And said, [d]Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

[d] Eccles. 5. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 7.

22 In all this Job sinned not, nor [1]charged God foolishly.

[1] Or, *attributed folly to God.*

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lished their dominion at Babylon." These incursions from opposite quarters, Sabæans from the south, Chaldeans from the north, completed the destruction of Job's substance, but this draws from him no word of complaint: the "hedge" (*v.* 10) is broken down, the "blessing" gone, the "cattle" and "household" destroyed, but he remains stedfast.

18. *eldest brother's house*] See *v.* 13: all therefore occurred on one day.

19. A great wind **from beyond the wilderness**: a hurricane simultaneous with the thunderstorm which had destroyed the cattle.

smote the four corners] This shews that it was a whirlwind, or cyclone, far more destructive than direct winds.

the young men] Or "young people;" the Hebrew word includes both sexes, as in the Pentateuch.

20. *Then Job arose*] Then only, not until his heart was smitten by the loss of his children.

rent his mantle] The outer robe worn by men of rank. See note on 1 Sam. ii. 19. The shaving of the head, an act done slowly and carefully, indicates mastery over the strong passion: there was no wild tearing of hair, but simply the adoption of the usual form of mourning. Cf. Jer. vii. 29; Isa. xxii. 12. It was not, however, enjoined by the Levitical law, except in the case of Nazarites, see Num. vi. 9.

worshipped] *i.e.* he prostrated himself, the most solemn act of adoration; thus directly, though unconsciously, refuting the assertion (see *v.* 11) that he would renounce God in bereavement.

21. *Naked,* &c.] These words of Job are arranged in metrical order, as is not uncommon on occasions of intense excitement. Thus, though less distinctly, the words of Job and his wife in the next chapter, *vv.* 9, 10.

return thither] *i.e.* to the dust, or mother earth; or it may be to the state of unconsciousness which preceded, and was then believed to follow life. The former interpretation is however preferable, and is supported by passages which recognize the analogy between the womb and the earth, the source and receptacle of living creatures. See *e.g.* Ps. cxxxix. 15. Cf. Eccles. v. 15, and Ecclus. xl. 1. Bp. Wordsworth compares the well-known action of Brutus, Liv. I. 56.

the Lord] The great name Jehovah occurs twice only in the dialogue; here and ch. xii. 9, where see note.

blessed] Thus Job uses the very word which Satan expected, but in its true and good sense, as an expression of resignation and unbroken trust. Stripped of all outward things Job was but the nearer to God.

22. *nor charged God foolishly*] Lit. "did not give folly to God:" an expression which may either mean (a) "did not attribute to God anything inconsistent with goodness and wisdom," (thus the marg., LXX., Delitzsch, Hirz., Schlott. and Merx), or (b) "did not utter any foolishness against God." (Vulg. neque stultum quid contra Deum locutus est.) The second rendering seems on the whole to suit the context, since the special object of the temptation was to make Job blaspheme. Ewald and Dillmann explain the words somewhat differently, "gave no offence to God," *i.e.* did or said nothing foolish or offensive to God. The expression "in all this" may possibly be intended to prepare the reader for a different result when the trial should exceed the patriarch's strength, and cause him to "speak unadvisedly with his lips."

NOTES on CHAP. I. 1, and 5.

1. Job, איוב the obvious derivation is from איב, and the meaning, "hated." Dr Lee observes the apparent reference to Gen. iii. 15; where the word איבה, enmity, is used. The form, as Gesenius shews, is grammatical. The objection, however, that the name must in

that case have been given after the events described in this book, has some weight; it applies equally to the derivation from the Arabic avvāb, an earnest and sincere penitent. The word occurs frequently in the Koran, and is applied to David, Sur. 38. 16, and generally to penitents: to Job in the same Sur. *v.* 40, but evidently without reference to his name. There is, moreover, the serious objection that the root (آب for أوب) is not found in Hebrew; it corresponds to שוב, and was, probably, formed from it by phonetic decay. The last derivation in the foot-note seems on the whole the most satisfactory.

5. *Cursed*] This meaning is defended by Gesen. on the strong ground that the word occurs with the same double sense in Æthiopic, Syr., Chald. and Maltese. The literal sense is "bend the knee," as a camel, hence, to supplicate, implore a blessing, or a curse, probably also, to do an act of homage in taking leave of a superior, as in Gen. xlvii. 7. Merx substitutes קלל without any authority, and contrary to the bearing of the narrative. Satan might expect that Job, and Job might fear that his sons, would renounce God, not that either would curse their Maker. It is true, as Dr Ginsburg shews in the Introduction to the Rabbinic Bible, that such a change might be justified by reference to the explicit rule laid down in the Talmud, that cacophonous expressions are to be changed into euphemisms: but the usage of the cognate dialects appears to be conclusive in support of one or the other rendering, "curse," or "take leave of," in the sense of renouncing.

CHAPTER II.

1 *Satan appearing again before God obtaineth further leave to tempt Job.* 7 *He smiteth him with sore boils.* 9 *Job reproveth his wife, moving him to curse God.* 11 *His three friends condole with him in silence.*

AGAIN there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

2 And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And [a] Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, [b] a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, [†] to destroy him without cause.

4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he *is* in thine hand; [‖] but save his life.

7 ¶ So went Satan forth from the

[a] chap. i. 7.
[b] chap. 1. 1, 8.
[†] Heb. *to swallow him up.*
[‖] Or, *only*

CHAP. II. 3. *holdeth fast his integrity*] This expression occurs frequently, and is the key-note of the work. Cf. ch. xxvii. 5, 6. According to Satan, Job's integrity was bound up with outward conditions, and would fail when they were changed.

movedst me] A strong expression, equivalent to "didst tempt or instigate Me:" it belongs to anthropomorphical representations of God common in Holy Writ, and is most impressive as indicating a depth and extent of sympathy between man and the divine nature, of which philosophy can give no account. Satan certainly did move God to act, since his calumny was the immediate occasion of Job's calamity, but the result was the complete overthrow of his own position, and the establishment of the principles which he assailed.

4. *Skin for skin*] The exact meaning of this proverbial saying is doubtful, but the general sense is determined by the context: so long as a man's own person is untouched he may bear any loss with comparative firmness, give up the skin or life (cf. xviii. 13, xix. 26) of others, even of his children, so that his own be safe; and if he attributes his preservation to God may still retain his allegiance. Satan can recognize no principle of action but selfishness, and finds in it alone the secret of Job's firmness.

6. *but save his life*] Or as in the marg. **only**. The affliction was to be such that Job would count his life as lost; that was essential to the completeness of the trial: but it was equally essential that it should be preserved, lest the vindication of Job's righteousness should involve unrighteousness in God.

presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

9 ¶ Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

11 ¶ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

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7. *sore boils*] The symptoms of the disease are incidentally noted in the course of the following dialogues, and leave no doubt that it was elephantiasis. The original word means an intense heat, hence a burning and ulcerous swelling, or leprosy in its most terrible form, taking its name from the appearance of the body, which is covered with a knotty cancerous bark like the hide of an elephant: the whole frame is in a state of progressive dissolution, ending slowly but surely in death. One of the most painful results to Job was that he knew it would be regarded as a decisive proof that he was suffering for some hidden and unpardonable sin. On the whole subject, see notes on Lev. ch. xiii.

8. *to scrape*] The first symptoms are itching and foul discharge.

the ashes] Probably outside the house, or city (LXX.), as usual with lepers. The LXX. use the word "dung" which may possibly be correct; thus Wetzstein (ap. Del. p. 365) describes the heaps of dry dung found outside every town and village in the Hauran. He specially observes that persons smitten with loathsome diseases lie on them day and night. It is to be observed that Satan is no more mentioned in the book: his work was done; there is no notice of inward promptings or temptations on his part; the sharper test of mental suggestion was applied to Job by his wife and friends.

9. *his wife*] Her weaker nature, broken by the loss of her children, gave way at the sight of her husband's misery. Her words shew an instinctive perception of the question really at issue: she uses the very words attributed to the Almighty, *v.* 3, and evidently considers that Job's pertinacity in maintaining his righteousness is either the cause or aggravation of the infliction: the counsel which she gives is just that which Satan expected would be suggested by Job's own heart (see quotations). Satan, who slew the children of Job, left his wife untouched; her unregulated love made her in fact an efficient though unconscious agent of his will. One only allusion is afterwards made to her (see ch. xix. 17), but that indicates a fastidious, self-indulgent temperament.

retain] or **hold fast**, as in *v.* 3. For "dost thou still," LXX. have "how long," which Merx adopts.

10. *foolish*] Not merely foolish, but vile, of a low grovelling nature: the Hebrew word is used of brutal and gross forms of moral evil, of the fool who says in his heart, "there is no God," Ps. xiv. 1.

receive] Job thus recognizes the affliction as coming from God, but simply declares the duty of submission. The expression "with his lips" may possibly imply that the hard thoughts which he afterwards utters were beginning to work inwardly; but his answer was a real victory over the last and most grievous temptation.

11. *when Job's three friends*, &c.] A few weeks might suffice for the news to reach them, and for them to make mutual arrangements for their journey: the rapidity of communication between dwellers in the desert is proverbial; even in that time the disease would make great progress, and Job would be realizing the full extent of his wretchedness; still from ch. vii. 3 it may probably be inferred that months had intervened.

Eliphaz] The name is historical, and was borne by a son of Esau; but it is significant, "my God is gold," which, though capable of a good meaning, my God is altogether precious, has a suspicious sound, and may imply an inherent (perhaps inherited) tendency to identify goodness with wealth. He was probably descended from Eliphaz the son of Esau (Gen. xxxvi. 4, 10, 11), whose own son, Teman, gave his name to the district. 1 Chron. i. 45. It was famed for the wisdom of its inhabitants. See Jer. xlix. 7; Obad. 8, 9.

the Shuhite] i.e. from the district named after Shuah, son of Abraham and Keturah, Gen. xxv. 2, and 1 Chron. i. 32; it lay probably to the east of the Hauran, and has been identified with Shakka.

12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

13 So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great.

CHAPTER III.

1 *Job curses the day and services of his birth.* 13 *The ease of death.* 20 *He complaineth of life, because of his anguish.*

AFTER this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.

2 And Job †spake, and said,

3 [a]Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night *in which* it was said, There is a man child conceived.

4 Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

5 Let darkness and the shadow of death ‖stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; ‖let the blackness of the day terrify it.

6 *As for* that night, let darkness

† Heb. *answered.*
[a] chap. 10. 18, 19. Jer. 20. 14.
‖ Or, *challenge it.*
‖ Or, *let them terrify it, as those* who have *a bitter day.*

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the Naamathite] There was a Naama in Judea, but the home of Zophar was probably in a district, now unknown, in the neighbourhood of Job. The name occurs not unfrequently in Syria. The LXX. render the word Μιναῖος, probably referring to Maon, now Maan, a district to the east of Petra.

12. *afar off*] This supports the explanation of the LXX., see *v.* 8; they saw Job on the heap outside the dwelling.

knew him not] Another symptom of the disease; their friend was so blackened and disfigured, that they could not recognize him. The signs of mourning which follow have always been customary in the East, but Job seems to allude to them as exaggerated and forced: see ch. vi. 15—27.

13. *none spake a word unto him*] The cause of this prolonged silence has been questioned. Among the Jews it is a point of decorum, and one dictated by a fine and true feeling, not to speak to a person in deep affliction until he gives an intimation of a desire to be comforted; such was possibly their motive, as seems to be indicated by the last words in the chapter. Others see in this silence one sign of perplexity as to the origin of the infliction, and a suspicion that Job's conscience might be burdened with some hidden guilt: in either case the long weary suspense was too much for his feelings, he could bear it no more, and at last gave expression to the agony which he had hitherto endured in silence. With that expression the long colloquy is opened in which the causes and principles of heaven-sent afflictions are discussed.

CHAP. III. **1.** *opened his mouth*] This expression is used in Scripture only on solemn occasions, when the speakers give utterance to deep thoughts, or, as here, to long-repressed feelings. Cf. Matt. v. 2, and Ps. lxxviii. 2.

cursed] The word used here is different from that explained above, ch. i. 5; it means cursed as a worthless and despicable thing.

2. *spake*] Or as in marg. **answered.** The silence of Job's friends was expressive, and drew out his words in answer to their thought.

3. *Let the day perish*] The exaggeration is but the natural expression of hopelessness. Job was quite conscious that his words were but the wild vague utterances of a boundless woe: see note on ch. vi. 3. The "day," *i.e.* the day on which he was born, and which he personifies in order to give vent to his feelings by cursing it.

the night in which it was said] Or **the night which said.** Job realizes both night and day as existences (cf. Ps. xix. 2); that night is represented as unnaturally rejoicing in the conception of a child doomed to wretchedness.

4. *let not God regard it*] Or "inquire for it:" the nights and days are conceived as waiting for God's call to enter upon their appointed course. The A.V. however has good authority; each day is the object of God's providential care; thus Ges. "ne curet eam."

5. *Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it*] Or **Let darkness and blackness claim it**; literally redeem it, *i.e.* as in marg. challenge it, as belonging properly to the region of darkness. The Hebrew words are the strongest in the language for utter night. The word rendered "shadow of death" is archaic, and means entire darkness, especially the blackness of Sheol, or Hades.

let a cloud dwell upon it] A heavy mass of clouds against which the dawn is represented as struggling in vain.

blackness] Not as in the marg. "those who have a bitter day:" the Hebrew word probably means hot suffocating glooms. Thus

seize upon it; ‖let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months.

‖ Or, let it not rejoice among the days.

7 Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein.

8 Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up ‖their mourning.

‖ Or, a leviathan.

9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but *have* none; neither let it see †the dawning of the day:

† Heb. the eyelids of the morning.

10 Because it shut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.

11 Why died I not from the womb? *why* did I *not* give up the ghost wher I came out of the belly?

12 Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck?

13 For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,

14 With kings and counsellers of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;

Ges., Hahn, Schlottmann. Job wishes that all the powers of darkness had assembled to drive back that day. Merx reads "Priests of day," an expression wholly unknown to Hebrew or Semitic writers. The Priests of Ra in Egypt could certainly not be meant. Their office was to adore, not to exorcise the Sun-god.

6. *darkness*] Or "blackness," utter absence of light.

be joined] Or **rejoice among**, as in the margin: thus Exod. xviii. 9; this presents a more forcible and appropriate image, the joy of motherly night.

7. *be solitary*] Or **barren**, literally "barrenness:" the imprecations upon day and night are carefully discriminated; day should be blackness, night should bear no more.

8. *that curse the day*] The expression was used in later Hebrew technically of hired mourners, and Aben Ezra takes it here in that sense (see Buxtorf, 'Lex. Chald.' p. 1524). But there is evidently an allusion to ancient and wide-spread superstitions: one of the earliest and most natural corruptions of religious feeling was a desperate struggle against the powers of nature: the sorcerer was believed, and believed himself, to be able to arrest the course of day and night by incantations. It does not follow that Job adopted the belief, though he found in it an apt expression of his feelings: see note on *v.* 3.

who are ready to raise up their mourning] This translation has no authority: it should be **who are prepared to arouse leviathan.** This word undoubtedly means the crocodile in ch. xli. of this book and elsewhere in Scripture: but it is in all probability here a symbol of the dragon, the enemy of light, who in old eastern traditions is conceived as ready to swallow up sun and moon and plunge creation in original chaos or darkness: the exact form in which this tradition, if known at all, was known to Job, is uncertain, but it probably originated in the Scriptural account of the Fall. Cf. Rev. xii. 4—9. Merx has a peculiar rendering of this and the following clause: "Would that the stars of the dawn thereof, which were appointed to arouse Leviathan, had never shined," understanding, as he explains it in a note on xxxviii. 33, the awakening of the heavenly crocodile; see note on xli. 18.

9. *the dawning of the day*] The marg. more literally, "the eyelids of the morning;" cf. xli. 18; a beautiful image found in Sophocles, 'Antigone,' 104, and adopted by Milton in the Lycidas, "under the opening eyelids of the morn."

10. *my...womb*] *i.e.* the womb which bore me; see note on ch. xix. 17.

11. *Why died I not*, &c.] Job passes to the next alternative, death before the awakening of consciousness. Thus Sophocles, expressing a general feeling of heathen antiquity, "Not to be born is best in every way: once born by far the better lot is then at once to go back whence we came." 'Œd. Col.' 1225. *μὴ φῦναι τὸν ἅπαντα νικᾷ λόγον· τὸ δ', ἐπεὶ φανῇ, βῆναι κεῖθεν ὅθεν περ ἥκει πολὺ δεύτερον ὡς τάχιστα.* Job counts up with the wild ingenuity of a diseased mind all the chances which might at once have cut his life short, but neither he, nor any God-fearing man in Scripture, generalized the notion. In the following verses he enumerates the actual inhabitants of the nether world whom he conceives as without sensation, beyond the reach alike of joy or misery.

13. *For now*] Or **For then should I have been lying still and quiet, I should have been asleep; then would there have been rest for me.**

14. *desolate places*] This may mean, as in other passages, "who rebuild destroyed cities," *i.e.* kings of great power, conquerors and restorers of kingdoms; or far more probably "who build desolations," *i.e.* sepulchres in the desert, such as the rock-tombs common not only in Egypt, but in Arabia, which must have been well known to Job. See Note below.

15 Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:

16 Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants *which* never saw light.

17 There the wicked cease *from* troubling; and there the †weary be at rest.

† Heb. *wearied in strength.*

18 *There* the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

19 The small and great are there; and the servant *is* free from his master.

20 Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter *in* soul;

21 Which †long for death, but it *cometh* not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

† Heb. *wait.*

22 Which rejoice exceedingly, *and* are glad, when they can find the grave?

23 *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hid, [b]and whom God hath hedged in?

[b] chap. 19. 8.

24 For my sighing cometh †before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.

† Heb. *before my meat.*

25 For †the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.

† Heb. *I feared a fear, and it came upon me.*

26 I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

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15 *that had gold*] Or "who **have** gold," an expression which probably implies, who lie in tombs where their gold and silver are buried with them: a well-known custom. Ornaments of great value, bracelets and jewels are found in Egyptian sepulchres, as *e.g.* in the tomb of the mother of Aahmes I. now in the museum at Boulaq; others of equal beauty are in the museum of Berlin. A papyrus of the age of Rameses III., contemporary with the early Judges, is now in process of unrolling and decipherment in the British Museum. Dr. Birch states that it contains an account of the trial and execution of robbers who broke into several tombs, and despoiled the mummies of large quantities of gold. This is the earliest notice of a crime known from the Papyrus Abbott; see Chabas, 'M. E.' III. Eastern poetry abounds in allusions to hidden treasures.

17—19. These verses, which describe the perfect rest of the departed, have a tone of deep mournfulness; the passionate heavings gradually subside, and give way to the calm of exhaustion: there is no gleam of light, though Job dwells, with what sounds like a melancholy satisfaction, upon the thought that death will bring repose. There is rest, but little comfort in the view, the only one as yet taken by Job, that in death there is equality of lot, whatever may be the difference of character or antecedents.

18. *the oppressor*] Or **exactor,** "taskmaster," the overseer appointed to summon labourers to their daily task. See Exod. iii. 7.

23. *whose way is hid*] The severest trial of Job was his inability to discern his way, to see the object and end of a life so miserably brought, as he believed, to its termination. In the word "hedged" there is an evident allusion to the opposite and true view of God's providence, see ch. i. 10. Job feels himself shut in on every side, but as a prisoner.

25. *For the thing*, &c.] Or **I fear a fear, and it befals me, and whatever I dread comes upon me.** Job is not speaking of his former state, as though he had lived in dread of a reverse: what he says is, For whatever presentiment of woe I may feel it is straightway realized. Gloomy and terrifying thoughts are among the most painful symptoms of Job's disease, and he feels that wild as they may be they do but presage a worse reality; he has lost all hope.

26. *I was not*, &c.] Or **I have no peace, nor quiet, nor rest, but trouble cometh,** *i.e.* trouble upon trouble, without cessation.

This chapter exhausts all expressions of agony; there is not a gleam of hope in it; the heart is quite crushed; still, so far as regards the precise object of the trial, there is no giving way. Job neither surrenders his own integrity, nor renounces his allegiance to God: not that his words are blameless, but the wrong in them belongs to the infirmity rather than to the corruption of man's nature. Shadows of dark superstition pass over Job's spirit, and give a form to his complaints, but they are from without, and find no abiding place in his heart. It must be observed that some of his very strongest expressions have been adopted by prophets and great saints, and by the King of Saints Himself. It is a striking point that the complaints of Job may in their form seem almost artificial. He plays, so to speak, with the terrible thoughts which haunt him: he is ingenious, certainly most imaginative, both in his imprecations and in the enumeration of his miseries. In this there is a singular faithfulness to nature, whether we attribute it to the genius or to the accuracy of the writer. The Greek tragedians are full of such cases; the suffering hero fills the air with complainings full of quaint and fan-

ciful allusions: and, as critics have noticed, the thoughts and language of Job have been either intentionally, or, more probably, instinctively and unconsciously reproduced by great modern poets, as Shakespeare and Goethe. It has been observed that the arrangement of this discourse is symmetrical, and falls into three portions, of which the first (*v.* 3—10) and the second (11—19) correspond exactly, like the strophe and antistrophe of a Greek Chorus, the remaining seven verses answering to the Epode: but this, if correct, would seem to be the natural result of feeling rather than of art; and modern critics differ altogether in their application of the principle. See Introduction, p. 13, note.

NOTE on CHAP. III. 14.

The Hebrew word bears a near resemblance to the Arabic for "pyramids," and Ewald, who is followed by Hitzig (see also Dillmann), thinks it most probable that they are meant. Job must have heard of the pyramids, and may have seen them: if so they would naturally occur to his mind in connection with the mighty dead. See note on xxi. 32. One of the most ancient designations of an obelisk, oer manu, (*i.e.* "the great obelisk" sc. of Chufu, De Rougé, 'Recherches,' p. 43), is not unlike the Arabic hirām, which Ewald accepts as the probable origin of the Hebrew word: but there can hardly be any direct connection with the Hebrew. The Egyptian for pyramid is āā; see Brugsch, 'D. H.' p. 162. The Arabic means literally "ancient buildings:" cf. Freytag, 'Lex. Arab.' s. v.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Eliphaz reproveth Job for want of religion.* 7 *He teacheth God's judgments to be not for the righteous, but for the wicked.* 12 *His fearful vision, to humble the excellency of creatures before God.*

THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

2 *If* we assay †to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but †who can withhold himself from speaking?

3 Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

4 Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened †the feeble knees.

† Heb. *a word.*

† Heb. *who can refrain from words?*

† Heb. *the bowing knees.*

CHAPS. IV. AND V.

The speech of Eliphaz opens the controversy. He lays down at once the principle which is maintained in various forms by Bildad and Zophar, and was held to be incontrovertible, and of universal application;—where there is suffering there must be sin; if borne patiently the suffering may pass away, the sin if confessed may be pardoned; but rebellious struggles, or a refusal to admit the justice of the infliction, can but end in destruction. The first colloquy, in which each speaker is answered in turn by Job, extends through ten chapters to the end of chap. xiv.

CHAP. IV. **1—11.** Eliphaz complains that Job in his affliction disregards the principles, with which he used to comfort other mourners, and declares that the innocent can never perish, while the unrighteous and violent reap but the just and necessary consequences of their guilt. Then, 12—21, he relates a vision in which the second principle is stated, that no man is guiltless before God, hence every affliction has its justification, and an appointed end. V. **1—7.** Impatience and angry struggles exclude all hope, and can but aggravate the affliction to which all are liable. **8—16.** The only remedy is to commit our cause humbly to God, who in His power, justice, and mercy, rectifies all inequalities. **17—27.** The result of chastisement is blessed to those who bear it in a right spirit, and to them it is always followed by restoration to happiness, and security from every form of evil. These topics are urged with calmness, dignity, and great beauty of expression: granted the premiss, which was scarcely regarded as open to question, the conclusion is irresistible; but its pitiless application to Job involved a charge of past guilt and present forgetfulness of God, not less painful and offensive because it was urged with a semblance of moderation, and accompanied with an expression of hope that the issue would be favourable.

2. *If we assay*] Or, "Should we speak a word to thee, wilt thou faint? yet who can refrain from speaking?" See Note below. There is great delicacy in this, but an undertone of severe rebuke. It implies that his words must needs be hard for Job to bear. Merx renders "May one venture a word to thee now thou art suffering?" The last clause may bear this construction, which is perhaps the true one: on "venture," see Note below. M. overlooks the connection between *vv.* 1 and 5.

3, 4. The tenderness of Job in former days, and kindly sympathy with sufferers,

5 But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

6 *Is* not *this* thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?

7 Remember, I pray thee, who *ever* perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

8 Even as I have seen, [a]they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

9 By the blast of God they perish, and [1]by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

11 The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

12 Now a thing was [†]secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

13 In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men,

14 Fear [†]came upon me, and trembling, which made [†]all my bones to shake.

[a] Prov. 22. 8. Hos. 10. 13.
[1] That is, *by his anger*, as Isai. 30. 33.
† Heb. *by stealth*.
† Heb. *met me*.
† Heb. *the multitude of my bones*.

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are thus incidentally recognized by the first interlocutor, who anticipates and justifies Job's own defence of his character: compare chap. xxix. 15, 16, 25; xxxi. 16—21, 29—32.

4. *feeble knees*] Lit. as in marg. "bowing knees." giving way from terror or exhaustion. Cf. Isa. xxxv. 3. The Targ. takes it in the sense of yielding to sin.

5. *and thou faintest*] The same word which in *v.* 2 is rendered in A. V. "be grieved." In both cases it denotes undue depression of spirit.

6. This verse should be rendered **was not thy piety thy confidence? Thy hope, was not that also the integrity of thy ways?** Eliphaz refers to the past in which Job professed to ground all his hopes upon his fear of God and consciousness of integrity, the two points really at issue throughout the trial. The implication is, if that piety and integrity were substantial, there ought to remain a certain expectation of deliverance, together with an unreserved submission to God's will. Cf. Prov. iii. 26.

7. The argument advances another step. Eliphaz holds that since only evil-doers perish miserably, a really remediless infliction must indicate radical ungodliness.

8. So far as I have seen, those who plough evil, and sow trouble, reap it. "Iniquity" and "wickedness" in the text do not exactly correspond to the original words, which express both the moral evil and its sure results. This is the oldest example of a figure which has been proverbial in all ages. Cf. Gal. vi. 7, 8.

9—11. Five different words are used in the original for lions; nomadic tribes have generally distinct names for animals in each stage of their growth; here we have (1) the full-grown lion whose roar shakes the desert; (2) the young lion when it first makes its voice heard; (3) the lion just verging on maturity when it is remarkable for the hardness of its bite; (4) the old lion; the Hebrew means generally the old lion in the fulness of strength, but here in extreme age, and no longer able to seize its prey; and (5) the whelps of the lioness scattered at her death. The object is to shew that, in every stage of its development, guilt, especially the guilt of cruelty and oppression, brings ruin: it may suggest the first suspicion likely to present itself to the mind of a chief, that Job, or still more probably his sons, had oppressed their neighbours, or secretly joined in marauding expeditions; they may therefore have suffered as whelps of the old lion, or as having already broken the peace of the desert. Such was the impression at least which the imagery must have made on the father's heart, shewing him in what light his calamity was likely to be regarded.

12—16. We have here the oldest and the finest description of a spiritual visitation.

12. Or, **Now unto me a word came stealthily**, like a thief's noiseless entrance at night, his breath just stirring the half-conscious sense.

a little thereof] Or **a whisper**; the word probably denotes, both here and in xxvi. 14, a low indistinct sound. Sym. ψιθυρισμος; Vulg. "susurrus." The A. V. follows the Rabbinical usage.

13. The moment at which the apparition came was when Eliphaz was just waking up from a deep but troubled sleep, the mind full of some wild half-forgotten dream, in the dead stillness of night.

In thoughts] The word, which occurs only here and xx. 2, means doubtful, perplexed thoughts.

deep sleep] As in Gen. ii. 21, and xv. 12.

14. First comes the feverish shudder, the trembling and quaking of the whole frame, with an intense susceptibility to impressions appertaining to the spiritual sphere.

15 Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image *was* before mine eyes, [1]*there was* silence, and I heard a voice, *saying*,

17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker?

18 Behold, he [b]put no trust in his servants; [1]and his angels he charged with folly:

19 How much less *in* them that dwell in [c]houses of clay, whose foundation *is* in the dust, *which* are crushed before the moth?

20 They are [†]destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding *it*.

21 Doth not their excellency *which is* in them go away? they die, even without wisdom.

[1] Or, *I heard a still voice*.

[b] chap. 15. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 4.

[1] Or, *nor in his angels, in whom he put light*.

[c] 2 Cor. 5. 1

[†] Heb. *beaten in pieces*.

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15. *a spirit passed*] The word implies a rapid gliding motion like wind over grass. The term "spirit" is in most languages (*e.g.* Greek, Latin, Sanscrit) ambiguous, meaning either wind or spirit; the movement of the air is often represented in Holy Writ as the medium or signal of spiritual communications; see Ps. civ. 4; 1 K. xix. 11; Acts ii. 2.

stood up] Or shivered, bristled, rose on end: the original is exceedingly graphic, each hair stood erect and stiffened in horror.

16. **It stood, but I discerned not its aspect, a form before mine eyes, a hush, and I heard a voice.** The terms are the most vague and indefinite that could be found; there was a form, yet shapeless and undistinguishable, a voice, but scarcely audible, or audible only to the inner sense. Milton takes from this his representation of Death:

"If shape it could be called that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed."

17. The voice answers the inward question, What account can be given of the apparent inequalities in God's ways? Only that every man is essentially unjust in his sight, and therefore liable to punishment. Eliphaz seems to represent himself, and doubtless with truth, as having once been beset by doubts, which were cleared up by a revelation so dim and mysterious in its form as to be scarcely distinguishable from the inner movements of his consciousness.

18. "Lo, he has no trust in his servants;" even His immediate attendants, the angels near His Throne, have not His entire confidence. He knows that they are liable to err, that left to themselves they might fall, as some have already fallen. This appears to be the true meaning of the passage; it is not contrary to the teaching of churchmen, who hold that no creature stands but by special grace. On the peculiarity of this statement, see Introd. § 7.

folly] The word here used in the original is not that which commonly expresses folly; it occurs in no other passage, and probably means **error**, *i.e.* liability to err; see last note. This rendering, proposed by Schnurr and Ewald, is defended by Dillmann, who gives the root lately discovered in Æthiopic.

19. *houses of clay*] *i.e.* earthly bodies; an allusion to Genesis ii. 7. Cf. ch. x. 9; xxxiii. 6; 2 Cor. iv. 7.

foundation] *i.e.* origin, material ground of existence. The words are important, as teaching the duality of man's nature, a spirit dwelling in an earthly tabernacle, liable to destruction from the meanest external causes.

moth] cf. xiii. 28.

20. *destroyed*] The marg. more accurately, **they are beaten in pieces.**

from morning to evening] *i.e.* in a day: a sudden and complete destruction; cf. Isa. xxx. 13.

for ever] This does not necessarily imply the annihilation of the inner principle of life, the soul which dwells in the perishable tabernacle.

21. *excellency*] *i.e.* the spiritual principle, which is thus stated not to be destroyed but removed. The word, however, probably means the cord which fastens a tent, an apt figure of the soul which sustains the fleshly tabernacle: thus J. D. Mich., Hirzel, Del., Dillmann. Merx. This passage then, like numberless others in the Old Testament, leaves the question of the continuance of personal consciousness untouched, but is perfectly reconcileable with that truth, and indeed prepares the way for the revelation of it.

without wisdom] *i.e.* without having taken God's previous visitations to heart, and so numbering "their days as to apply their hearts unto wisdom," Ps. xc. 12; cf. ch. xxxvi. 12; Prov. x. 21.

NOTE on CHAP. IV. 2.

The construction is doubtful; נִסָּה, is generally taken to be the third person s., of Piel from נסה, "to attempt;" but there is but one instance of נסה followed by an accusative, Eccles. vii. 23; and in a different sense. If as Niph. it must be taken impersonally "should a word be assayed unto thee," a construction for which there is no authority, and which seems harsh. It seems preferable to make נסה = נשׂא, in the common sense "utter," in which case the verb would be first person pl. Kal, and the rendering as in the note. Ewald and Böttch. (quoted by Dillmann) translate the clause thus: "shall we speak a word unto thee which thou takest ill?" but תלאה, as Dill. observes, can scarcely be transitive.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The harm of inconsideration.* 3 *The end of the wicked is misery.* 6 *God is to be regarded in affliction.* 17 *The happy end of God's correction.*

CALL now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou [1]turn?

2 For wrath killeth the foolish man, and [2]envy slayeth the silly one.

3 I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

4 His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither *is there* any to deliver *them*.

5 Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.

6 Although [3]affliction cometh not

[1] Or, *look?*
[2] Or, *indignation.*
[3] Or, *iniquity.*

CHAP. V. 1. *Call now*] The meaning of this verse has been contested, but is sufficiently clear: if Job does not submit himself to God's visitation without murmuring, he will find none to sympathize with him in heaven or earth: men and angels are alike subject to God, and have neither the power nor, if good, the will to take part with His enemies. It may be inferred from this passage that the invocation of saints or angels was not unknown in the patriarch's time (see Int. § 7), but Eliphaz distinctly affirms its inutility in the case when a man is not reconciled with God; if he be reconciled, it would of course be needless.

the saints] "Holy ones," *i.e.* the holy spirits, or angels: see xv. 15; Zech. xiv. 5; Ps. lxxxix. 5, 7; Dan. iv. 13.

2. *For wrath*] The connection of thought is this: nothing can be done for a man who indulges such feelings as those which pervade Job's complaint, for wrath indicates folly or depravity (alluding to ch. iii. 1—10), and can have no end but destruction; and envy, which prefers any lot to one's own, even that of non-existence or death (ch. iii. 14—19), is sinful infatuation; a word which corresponds to the Hebrew both in meaning and origin (fatuus, Heb. פתה).

3. *I have seen*] Eliphaz supports his saying by an example: he has seen such a fool (using the same word) settled for a time, and outwardly prosperous, but he soon cursed him, apparently because he saw in the sudden destruction of his house a proof of God's anger, and therefore of the man's ungodliness. It does not appear that Eliphaz had previously seen any indications of moral depravity in Job; he trusted to the general principle, which he held to be applicable to all in such a position. Merx follows LXX., and renders the clause, "and his house decayed suddenly." A far less suitable expression.

4. *His children*] An evident reference to the death of Job's children. Eliphaz dwells with complacency upon the result of a bad man's ruin; his children are involved in it; they are exposed to every kind of danger; are broken to pieces (cf. Prov. xxii. 22) by litigations (the Hebrew probably implies against one another) in the gate, where the courts of justice were held (cf. xxix. 7, xxxi. 21), and find no helper, none to take up their cause as advocate or intercessor: a terrible picture of the misery which at all times in the East has fallen upon the orphans of criminal or suspected parents.

5. *Whose harvest*] The family property left thus without defence is plundered.

out of the thorns] *i.e.* the plunderers are not stopped by the thorny hedges. The word occurs only here and in Prov. xxii. 5. Merx alters the text slightly, and renders, "and God taketh it out of their baskets."

the robber] Literally, "the snare," or, according to some, "the thirsty," *i.e.* crafty or greedy spoilers: thus Vulg., Syr., Aq., Symm.: a rendering which would require a slight alteration in the Hebrew text.

6. *affliction*] The words rendered "affliction" in this verse and "trouble" in the following are the same which occur in the preceding chapter, *v.* 8. *i.e.* **evil and trouble.** Eliphaz denies that they take place as results of natural laws, as the spontaneous produce of the soil; wherever they are found they spring

forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;

7 Yet man is born unto ‖trouble, as †the sparks fly upward.

8 I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:

9 [a]Which doeth great things †and unsearchable; marvellous things †without number:

10 Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the †fields:

11 [b]To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

12 [c]He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands ‖cannot perform *their* enterprise.

13 [d]He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

14 [e]They ‖meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

15 But he saveth the poor from

‖ Or, *labour*. † Heb. *the sons of the burning coal lift up to fly*. [a] chap. 9. 10. Psal. 72. 18. Rom. 11. 33. † Heb. *and* there is *no search*. † Heb. *till* there be *no number*. † Heb. *outplaces*.

[b] 1 Sam. 2. 7. Psal. 113. 7. [c] Neh. 4. 15. Psal. 33. 10. Isai. 8. 10. ‖ Or, *cannot perform any thing*. [d] 1 Cor. 3. 19. [e] Deut. 28. 29. ‖ Or, *run into*.

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up because man's guilt has ploughed the ground and sowed the evil seed.

7. *Yet*] Rather "For." Eliphaz states the cause of trouble, man inherits it as the portion of his corrupt nature, though it is only brought into activity by his own sin.

as the sparks fly upward] literally "and children of flame fly on high:" it is questioned what is meant by "children of flame;" our version "sparks" is probably correct; it gives a good sense, accords with Hebrew idiom, and rests on sufficient authority; thus Dillmann, Merx, and other critics. Lightning, unless meteoric flashes were meant, is less probable. Other interpretations, such as "birds of prey" (thus LXX., Aq., Sym.), or "angels," have been proposed, but are inadmissible. The comparison is clear whichever meaning is preferred; the tendency of man is to suffer trouble, as that of fiery natures is to fly upwards.

8. Our version omits a word of some importance as marking a transition in the discourse. I **however**. Eliphaz refers most probably to the fact that Job's only notice of God had been a complaint that He had hedged him in: the only right course for a sufferer is stated with exceeding force and beauty: the whole sting of these remarks consists in the implication that Job had not given himself unreservedly into God's hand.

9. *and unsearchable*] A point of the highest importance: the cause of the visitation may be hidden, and deliverance may seem impossible, but both the secret and the power are with God. Cf. ch. ix. 10; xxxvii. 5.

10. *rain*] The first thought of a dweller in those regions: Eastern poetry is full of it: rain is the type of all blessings, especially of restoration to life. In the Koran it is repeatedly adduced as the figurative representation, and almost as the proof, of the general resurrection. See Ps. lxv. 9, 10; Jer. xiv. 22, and notes on Acts xiv. 17.

waters upon the fields] *i.e.* springs and watercourses in the open country.

11. *To set up*] This statement implies that the providential care of God has always a moral end and object: He gives rain for the sake of the lowly and distressed.

12. *crafty*] Eliphaz in this and other clauses (as ch. xv. 2—5) seems to insinuate that Job's apparent wisdom might be its mere counterfeit, viz. ungodly craft. The word is the same that is used of the serpent in Genesis. St Paul quotes this (see marg. ref.) as expressing a general truth: the error of Eliphaz was not in the sentiment but in its application to Job. It is remarkable that in the two passages in which St Paul quotes the book of Job he does not follow the Septuagint. Dr Kautzsch has shewn (1) that the Apostle had most probably a different version; and (2) that the LXX. version of Job was little known. See the review on the work of Dr K. ('De veteris Testamenti locis a Paulo ap. allegatis'), by Diestel, in the 'Jahrbücher für Deutsche Theologie,' 1870, p. 155.

their enterprise] The Hebrew word, which is used frequently in Prov. and Job, means properly soundness, that which is real and substantial, or the quality of mind which corresponds to it, sound practical sense. Thus the meaning is, their hands can perform nothing that is desirable or substantial, a sense fairly expressed by the word "enterprise."

13. *carried headlong*] This implies, probably, that plotters are ruined by the sudden disclosures of their plans: they are hurried on by seeming success.

14. This verse describes the bewilderment and helplessness of one so unexpectedly foiled, and may allude to Job's complaint that his "way was hid," and that he was "hedged in" by God. Cf. Isa. lix. 10.

15. *But he saveth*] The next object of Eliphaz is to shew that, supposing Job after all to be an innocent sufferer, this view of God's dealing assures him of deliverance: in *v.* 17 he enforces this practical application with great beauty; since no affliction comes without an object it must be a benefit to

the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

[f Psal. 107. 42.] 16 [f]So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

[g Prov. 3. 12. Hebr. 12. 5. Jam. 1. 12. Rev. 3. 19.] 17 [g]Behold, happy *is* the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

[h Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Isai. 30. 26. Hos. 6. 1.] 18 [h]For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

[i Ps. 91. 3.] 19 [i]He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

20 In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war †from the power of the sword. [† Heb. *from the hands.*]

21 Thou shalt be hid ‖from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. [‖ Or, *when the tongue scourgeth.*]

22 At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

23 [k]For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. [k Hos. 2. 18.]

24 And thou shalt know ‖that thy tabernacle *shall be* in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not ‖sin. [‖ Or, *that peace is thy tabernacle.*] [‖ Or, *err.*]

25 Thou shalt know also that thy seed *shall be* ‖great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth. [‖ Or, *much.*]

26 Thou shalt come to *thy* grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn †cometh in in his season. [† Heb. *ascendeth.*]

27 Lo this, we have searched it, so it *is*; hear it, and know thou *it* †for thy good. [† Heb. *for thyself.*]

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those who submit to it, and take it as a correction: see the marginal references, which shew how thoroughly this view is recognized under both dispensations. Cf. Ps. xxxv. 10.

from their mouth] These words are in apposition to the sword, which is figurative, expressing the effects of calumny and malice: cf. Ps. xvii. 10, 13. Several MSS. have a preferable reading, sc. "from the sword of their mouth," *i.e.* as in Ps. lvii. 4; lix. 7; from calumnies and evil words.

19. *six...seven*] A common idiom, whatever may be the actual number of troubles: four are here enumerated, famine, war, slander, and destruction, or sudden ruin, specially that caused by the incursion of enemies. Cf. Amos i. 6.

no evil] *i.e.* no real evil, evil without hope or remedy.

21. Cf. Ps. xxxi. 20.

23. *thou shalt be in league with*] *i.e.* all nature being in subjection to God must be in a covenant of peace with His friends; all things will therefore work together not only for their spiritual but temporal good. Cf. Prov. xvi. 7.

24. *and shalt not sin*] Or, **and shalt miss nothing.** Job is thus promised the exact reverse of all that he had experienced; a safe home, flocks untouched, a happy and prosperous family, a peaceful old age. It must have sounded like a bitter mockery, and as such he resents it.

26. *in a full age*] Like the patriarchs: see Gen. xv. 15; xxv. 8; xxxv. 29. See Note below. Compare Milton,

So mayest thou live, till, like ripe fruits, thou drop
Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease
Gathered, not harshly plucked; for death mature.—*Paradise Lost*, XI.

cometh in] Or, **cometh up**, see marg. Threshing-floors were generally on hills; cf. note on Judg. vi. 8, and 2 S. xxiv. 18.

27. *for thy good*] Literally as in the marg. "for thyself." Eliphaz is confident that no man of sense can come to any other conclusion.

NOTE on CHAP. V. 26.

Merx reads בלח for כלח: as Deut. xxxiv. 7: *i.e.* in full vigour; LXX. ὥσπερ σῖτος ὥριμος: but כלח, which occurs again xxx. 2 (where Merx leaves it unaltered), suits the context perfectly.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Job sheweth that his complaints are not causeless.* 8 *He wisheth for death, wherein he is assured of comfort.* 14 *He reproveth his friends of unkindness.*

BUT Job answered and said,

2 Oh that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity †laid in the balances together!

† Heb. *lifted up.*

3 For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore ‖my words are swallowed up.

‖ That is, *I want words to express my grief.*

4 [a]For the arrows of the Almighty *are* within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

[a] Ps. 38. 2.

5 Doth the wild ass bray †when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?

† Heb. *at grass.*

6 Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there *any* taste in the white of an egg?

7 The things *that* my soul refused to touch *are* as my sorrowful meat.

8 Oh that I might have my request;

CHAP. VI. Job meets the arguments of Eliphaz in order. The first point which made Eliphaz doubt the integrity of Job, and on which his argument hinges, was the bitterness of spirit, the "wrath" which Job gave way to in his affliction. Job first addresses himself to this argument, 1—7.

2. *grief*] Or **wrath**, the same word which Eliphaz used in v. 2. The change of word in the A.V. obscures the force of the argument. Eliphaz regarded the wrath as indicating moral folly, Job answers that it is not out of proportion with his calamity. The word rendered calamity is peculiar, meaning an abysmal boundless misery. See Schultens on this verse and on Prov. xix. 13.

in the balances] The weighing of words and thoughts in scales is not an uncommon figure in classic writers, but it belongs to the remotest antiquity. In the Egyptian Ritual the day of weighing words is a common term for the day of judgment, as in chapter i.; and the vignette to the 125th chapter represents the weighing of the heart in the presence of Osiris. 'Todtenbuch,' l. c.

3. *For now it would be heavier*] Or, **for now it is heavier.** Job speaks of his calamity, which can only be compared with the sands on the sea-shore, a proverbial expression for what cannot be counted or measured; see Prov. xxvii. 3; Ecclus. xxii. 15.

are swallowed up] This rendering is defensible (see note below), but the word more probably means "wander," or "are idle" (LXX. τὰ ῥήματά μου ἐστὶ φαῦλα). Job admits that his words are blameworthy, but excusable as the overflowings of natural sorrow. See Note below.

4. *drinketh up my spirit*] The poison, which reaches the springs of life, drinks up the spirit, *i.e.* absorbs all power of thought: this is Job's real excuse for his vehemence. This translation may be correct; it is that of the ancient versions, LXX., Vulg., Syr., Ar., thus too Rosenm.; but modern commentators generally prefer, "whose poison my spirit drinketh up." The use of poisoned arrows is mentioned frequently in classic authors, and appears to be of the remotest antiquity.

set themselves in array against me] Or, "are arrayed against me," "assail me in battle-array." This is a second defence; it accounts for the rebellious struggles, as instinctive movements of a soul assailed by a host of troubles. See Note below.

5. *when he hath grass*] Lit. "over grass," but the A.V. gives the true sense. Job argues that his words are but natural and instinctive expressions of feeling, like the sounds which are uttered by animals to denote their wants.

6. Both expressions in this verse are evidently proverbial. The meaning appears to be this. If that which is merely insipid and tasteless is naturally disliked, much more is an expression of loathing and disgust justified when the food offered is poisonous.

the white of an egg] The rendering is probably correct. It is defended by Dillmann. It has been objected that the Hebrews did not keep poultry before the Captivity, and that the word would not be used by the author of Job; but geese and ducks were kept by the Egyptians at the remotest period, and the egg of the ostrich was not likely to be thrown away by the nomads of Arabia: see note on xxxix. 15.

7. *The things that my soul*, &c.] Rather **My soul refuseth to touch, they are as loathsome food to me.** The translation and meaning of the first clause are clear. Job cannot accept the poison, his soul recoils from it: the sense of the second clause is most probably, "the evils which have come upon me are like diseased or poisonous food," lit. as disease of my food. This means more than loathsome food—food contaminated, and full of disease, food at once disgusting and unwholesome: how then can I receive it without such expressions of grief, or wrath, as appear to Eliphaz proofs of sin and unpar-

and that God would grant *me* †the thing that I long for!

† Heb. *my expectation.*

9 Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!

10 Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not spare; for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.

11 What *is* my strength, that I should hope? and what *is* mine end, that I should prolong my life?

12 *Is* my strength the strength of stones? or *is* my flesh †of brass?

† Heb. *brasen?*

13 *Is* not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?

14 †To him that is afflicted pity *should be shewed* from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.

† Heb. *To him that melteth.*

15 My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, *and* as the stream of brooks they pass away;

16 Which are blackish by reason of the ice, *and* wherein the snow is hid:

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donable folly? The LXX. "as the stench of a Lion:" adopted by Merx.

8—10. Eliphaz had represented death as the last punishment, Job now declares that it is his only hope. This represents a critical point in the argument; he consoles himself with one thought, that he has not sinned against God; thus, as in all former trials, holding fast his integrity, and his allegiance to God. As yet there is no indication of a hope beyond death.

8. *that I might have*, &c.] The meaning is correctly expressed; lit. "would that my request were fulfilled, and that God would grant my desire."

10. The general connection is clear: some words are difficult, but the meaning may be more clearly expressed: **So would it still be my comfort, and in the midst of my unsparing anguish would I exult that I have not denied** (*i.e.* renounced) the **words of the Holy One.** This comfort is not merely, as some commentators take it, that death will end his troubles, but that to the last he has the consciousness of having kept the faith: the renderings "exult" instead of "harden," and "deny" instead of "conceal" are now generally admitted, as well as the connection of "will not spare" with the preceding word "sorrow." The words of the Holy One are the commands of God, however made known to man. A Hebrew would probably have written "the law of Jehovah."

11—13. Job rejects the hope suggested by Eliphaz, and will not listen to the possibility of restoration.

11. *What is my strength*] He feels that his strength is already exhausted.

that I should prolong my life] Lit. "that I should stretch out my spirit," *i.e.* look forward with patience. The A.V. is wrong, and the true meaning is clear, but we have no phrase exactly equivalent to the Hebrew. Shortness of spirit is rendered anguish; Exod. vi. 9; cf. xxi. 4; see also Num. xxi. 4. Job sees no end to which he can possibly look forward with any hope, save that of dissolution.

13. *Is not my help in me?* &c.] Lit. "is not my no-help in me?" **Am I not helpless? And is not soundness driven out from me?** The word rendered "wisdom" means the soundness of constitution, which alone could justify the hope of prolonged life; see note on ch. v. 12; this has been driven out by the terrors set in array against Job; see *v.* 4.

14—30. Job, having thus briefly disposed of the arguments urged by Eliphaz, takes up another position, and attacks his friends, first for their neglect of the first duty of friends, compassion for the afflicted, 14—21; and then for their failure in argument, accompanied by injustice and cruelty, which involve far deeper guilt than idle and hasty words wrung from a sufferer.

14. *To him*, &c.] This expresses the sense of the Hebrew, though not the full force of the words or the conciseness of the phrase, "To the afflicted from his friend pity;" the latter clause means either "should he forsake the fear of the Almighty," or "lest he forsake." This gives a satisfactory sense; friends should above all things soothe a man's feelings lest he be driven to desperation. The word for afflicted is very graphic, "melted down," "dissolved," alluding, it may be, to the effect of the poisoned arrows, *v.* 4. See Note below.

15—21. The imagery of this passage is taken from a land intersected by ravines, deep wadys dry in summer, and filled suddenly after storms by torrents from neighbouring heights. This corresponds most exactly with the descriptions of the Hauran, in which there is no river flowing through the summer; whereas in winter (when these events took place, see note chap. i. 14) torrents rush with great impetuosity through cavernous ravines from the Jebel Hauran. See Ritter, 'Palestine,' p. 938.

15. *the stream of brooks*] The former word denotes the channel, the deep wady or ravine through which the brook or torrent rushes,

17 What time they wax warm, † they vanish: † when it is hot, they are † consumed out of their place.

18 The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.

19 The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.

20 They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.

21 ‖ For now ye are † nothing; ye see *my* casting down, and are afraid.

22 Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?

† Heb. *they are cut off.* † Heb. *in the heat thereof.* † Heb. *extinguished.*

‖ Or, *For now ye are like to them.* Heb. *to it.* † Heb. *not.*

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often with much noise and vehemence, soon passing away, and leaving only a heap of shingle. The simile is remarkably complete: when little needed the torrent overflows, when needed it disappears: in winter it does not fertilize, in summer it is dried up: nor is it merely useless; it deceives, alluring the traveller by the appearance of verdure, promising refreshment, and giving none. Such were the friends of Job with their noisy grief and vehement gesticulations, and the absence of genuine sympathy. Cf. Isa. lviii. 11.

pass away] Thus the Vv. and most commentators. Dillm. renders "which overflow." Merx follows the LXX., "they pass by me away."

16. *blackish*] The winter is generally sharp in the Hauran, when the deep channels are filled with dark turbid torrents.

is hid] A true and graphic expression for the dissolving snow.

17. *they vanish*] This expresses the sense better than the marginal rendering, "cut off," which is literally exact.

consumed] Or **are dried up**, lit. as in the margin, "extinguished," so xviii. 5, 6.

18. *The paths of their way*] Modern commentators generally adopt a different rendering. With a slight change in the punctuation of the Hebrew the sense may be, "the caravans turn aside from their way, diverge, that is, from the regular track, in order to supply themselves with water from the wady, but finding it empty, they go up into the desert, and perish." To this it is objected (by Del.) that the mention of caravans is premature, and belongs to the following verse; and, on the other hand, the old interpretation adopted by our translators, and defended on critical grounds by able scholars, adheres closely to the text, and gives a true and forcible sense. The paths of their way are turned aside, *i.e.* the torrent winds a tortuous course, part of it is dried up at once, part finds its way into the desert, where it speedily evaporates and vanishes.

they go to nothing] This may be the true interpretation if the A.V. of the preceding words be retained; if, however, the word for paths be rendered caravans, these should be rendered, they go up into the desert or waste. The same word Tohu is used in Gen. i. 2; Jer. iv. 23; see also xxvi. 7. It corresponds in meaning, and probably also in derivation, to Tih, the proper designation of the desert in which the Israelites wandered.

19. *The troops*] **The caravans.** The word "companies" in the next clause differs but little, if at all, in meaning; but in the copious vocabulary of the desert it is probable the different words may indicate some differences in the mode of travelling adopted by different tribes. Tema and Sheba may represent travellers from opposite quarters, some strangers to the district, others familiar with it; all perish alike when drawn out of their way by the false appearance of water. Tema was a tribe in the northern district of the Arabian desert, descended from Tema, a son of Ishmael. Gen. xxv. 15; Isai. xxi. 14; Jer. xxv. 23. The caravans of the Ishmaelites were in constant communication with Egypt; see Gen. xxxvii. 25. On Sheba see note on ch. i. 15.

20. *were ashamed*] Bitter disappointment is frequently expressed by words denoting shame, which includes the notion of ungrounded confidence: the caravans were ashamed to have been misled, as Job was ashamed to have calculated upon comfort from his friends.

21. *ye are nothing*] This translation is probably correct; the sense is clear, "ye are come to nought, like the dried-up torrent." The reading followed by our translators is defended by the generality of modern critics. The rendering in the margin follows the Masoretic reading, which seems to be purely conjectural.

casting down] Or, ye see a ruin, lit. "a breaking up" of my state.

22, 23. A bitter irony, implying that he might have been foolish had he counted upon substantial help, but that it was impossible to foresee that his friends would withhold the simple boon of pity, costing neither money nor exertion.

22. *a reward for me*] Or, **a present on my account**; that is, a gift, such as was customary in order to procure an advocate, or even to influence a judge: a bribe, however, would be too strong an expression, since the gift might be offered to one representing the interests of an injured family.

23 Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

24 Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

25 How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?

26 Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, *which are* as wind?

27 Yea, † ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig *a pit* for your friend.

28 Now therefore be content, look upon me; for *it is* † evident unto you if I lie.

29 Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness *is* ‖ in it.

30 Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot † my taste discern perverse things?

† Heb. *ye cause to fall upon.*

† Heb. *before your face.*

‖ That is, *in this matter.*

† Heb. *my palate.*

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23. *the enemy*, or *the mighty*] Or, "the violent," **an oppressor.**

24. *Teach me*] Job demands that since his friends have neither helped nor comforted him, they should at least convince him of error, pointing out in what his assumed guilt consisted. Eliphaz had inferred his folly, or sin, from the fact of his wrath; see ch. v. 2. With that accusation Job has already dealt, and now calls for more substantial reasons.

and I will hold my tongue] I will be silent; cf. xxxiv. 31—33.

25. *arguing*] Or, "reproving." Job uses the same word twice; what is it that ye reprove who reprove me? What is the point at which your accusation is aimed? What does your reproving prove?

26. *Do ye imagine*] Or, **propose.** Is it your object merely to reprove my words? The next clause should be rendered, **but the words of the despairing are for the wind.** Words wrung from a man in such a condition had, as Job would argue, no bearing upon the question of his guilt: they followed, and could not therefore have provoked, the visitation, and were after all merely uttered to the wind, borne away by it and leaving no trace, at the worst idle and meaningless.

27. *Yea, ye overwhelm*] Rather, **Even on the orphan would ye cast lots.** The meaning appears to be, "ye are pitiless as creditors who take the children of a debtor after his death" (see 2 K. iv. 1), casting lots for their several shares. The expression is not uncommon in reference to captives, Joel iii. 3; Nahum iii. 10. LXX. ἐνάλλεσθε, and Merx, as usual, alters the text, thereby weakening the sense. See Note below.

dig a pit] The rendering is defensible (thus Rosen., Ges.); but the word most probably means "traffic," *i.e.* "make gain over a friend," turning his misery to profit, as an occasion for uttering wise saws, and thus ministering to your own self-righteousness.

28. *Now*, &c.] Or, **And now do but look at me; for I surely shall not lie to your face.** The expression is thoroughly characteristic of Job, conscious of his integrity, and believing that no one could look at him stedfastly and distrust him.

29. *let it not be iniquity*] Or, **let there not be iniquity** (unfairness and dishonesty) **in your judgment.** The latter clause is rendered literally, according to the Masoretic reading, and may mean, try me over and over again, and you will but find me guiltless in the matter. The Cethib, however, has, "And my answer—still there is righteousness in it;" a reading which gives a sense well adapted to the context.

30. *Is there iniquity in my tongue?*] *i.e.* the words, which alone you condemn, are not open to the charge of iniquity; that charge rather applies to the unfair accuser.

my taste] Or, "my palate," as in the margin. The meaning is, my sense of right and wrong is not so far perverted that I cannot discern what is absolutely wicked.

perverse things] Or, "wickedness;" the Hebrew word, which occurs frequently in the Psalms, denotes utter and absolute wickedness: wickedness that causes destruction. Dillmann, however, is probably right in rendering the word "calamity," as in *v.* 2.

NOTES on CHAP. VI. 3, 4, 14, and 27.

3. The A.V. derives the word from לוע swallow. The derivation from لغا a common word in the Koran, where it means idle, especially irreligious talk, is far more probable: thus the LXX. ἐστι φαῦλα. The word, like many others peculiar to Job, occurs in the same sense in Æthiopic. The meaning "heated" proposed by Schultens, and accepted by Davison, is not justified by the Arabic لاع which gives a better sense, afflixit, or mœrore afflictus est.

4. LXX. *κεντοῦσι*, which Merx adopts, using the word ערק, as in xxx. 17.

14. Merx alters the reading (נמע for למס), and renders "He who withholds pity from his friend forsakes also the fear of the Almighty." But it is not likely that a word at once so unusual and so graphic should have been substituted for מנע.

27. For תפילו Merx reads תגדילו, LXX., *ἐπιπίπτετε*: this is not a judicious alteration; it substitutes a very common-place phrase for one that is remarkably expressive.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Job excuseth his desire of death.* 12 *He complaineth of his own restlessness,* 17 *and God's watchfulness.*

IS *there* not [1] an appointed time to man upon earth? *are not* his days also like the days of an hireling?

[1] Or, *warfare.*

2 As a servant [†] earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for *the reward of* his work:

[†] Heb. *gapeth after.*

3 So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

4 When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and [†] the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

[†] Heb. *the evening be measured?*

5 My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.

CHAP. VII. This chapter marks another stage in the development of Job's innermost feelings. In the first part, 1—10, he repudiates altogether the hope of a possible restoration to life, and claims the right of unqualified complaining. In the latter part, 11—21, he enters into direct expostulation with God. In all this he still keeps clear from the sin of renouncing God; so far the temptation completely fails; but he incurs the very serious reproach of arraigning His government. This distinction must be borne in mind throughout. Job is faulty, and "darkens counsel by words without knowledge," but his fault is that of a man who fears and loves God, yet cannot understand His ways.

1. *an appointed time*] **A time of service.** The reference is specially but not exclusively to military service, to which a man is bound for an appointed time. Cf. ch. xiv. 14; Isai. xl. 2. Thus the Vulg., Aq., and Targum. Job argues that since life is bounded within certain limits, with its appointed work, when those limits are reached and the work is done a man may be justified in longing for the rest of the grave. This position at once meets the argument of Eliphaz, and supplies a basis for the following expostulation.

2. *earnestly*, &c.] Or, **longeth for the shadow**, *i.e.* for the eventide, bringing at once rest and refreshment. All the words for service imply restraint and suffering.

3. *So am I made*, &c.] The natural sequence of thought would be, "So may I now long for death, and the end of my work;" but, with the rapid movement of an overwrought spirit, Job passes over this obvious inference, and dwells on the misery which suggested it.

months of vanity] Hence it may perhaps be inferred that some considerable time had elapsed before the arrival of Job's friends; see note, ch. ii. 11. The leprosy in its worst form lasts for years, consuming the frame gradually, but without cessation until death comes.

4. *When I lie down*] This is a fine touch: the longing for morn does not come, as to the Prometheus of Æschylus, after a night of suffering, but anticipates it. Job's one thought, as he lies down hopeless of rest or respite, is when will the light return, bringing with it at least more of consciousness, and more power to endure the agony. The extreme suffering at night is noted as specially characteristic of elephantiasis. On the general sentence, cf. Deut. xxviii. 67.

and the night be gone] This rendering may be accepted (Del., Rosen., Ges., Dav.); but the exact meaning of the Hebrew is probably, "and the eventide is very long." Dillm. Merx, "the night seems endless," and Renan, "et la nuit se prolonge."

5. *dust*] This verse gives an exact description of the symptoms of the disease. Maggots breed rapidly in the mouldering flesh; clods, as it were, of earth are formed by the dry swollen skin, rough as the hide of the elephant, which gives the name to the malady. When fully formed the lumps burst, the skin falls off in masses, and the body is covered by virulent discharge. Such symptoms, presented incidentally, and without consciousness on the part of the speaker that he is supplying materials for the diagnosis of his disease, do not belong to fiction; they bear the impress of living truth.

is broken, and become loathsome] **Stiffens and bursts again.** The first word denotes violent contraction, the latter, purulent discharge.

a ch. 16. 22. Psal. 90. 6. & 102. 11. & 103. 15. & 144. 4. Isai. 40. 6. James 4. 14.

† Heb. *shall not return.*

‖ *to see*, that is, *to enjoy.*

‖ That is, *I can live no longer.*

6 [a]My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

7 O remember that my life *is* wind: mine eye †shall no more ‖see good.

8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no *more*: thine eyes *are* upon me, and ‖I *am* not.

9 *As* the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no *more*.

10 He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

11 Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

12 *Am* I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?

13 When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

14 Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:

15 So that my soul chooseth strangling, *and* death rather †than my life.

16 I loathe *it*; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days *are* vanity.

17 [b]What *is* man, that thou should-

† Heb. *than my bones.*

b Psal. 8. 4. & 144. 3. Hebr. 2. 6.

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6. *a weaver's shuttle*] Cf. Isai. xxxviii. 12.

without hope] That is Job's present feeling. The question remains, whether the truth of a future vindication will reveal itself in the conflict of a soul conscious of integrity and devotion to God, but in misery, hopeless, so far as this life is concerned. In the actual state of Job's mind he can as yet wish for nothing but death.

7. *no more*] Or, "not again:" he hopes for no return of former happiness.

8. No stronger expressions can be found to express the certainty that death will be followed by no restoration to life in this world; but the conviction, though positive, goes no further. It does not touch the question of life with and in God in another world; a question still to be raised, and, once raised, as surely solved.

are upon me] *i.e.* look for me. Ps. xxxvii. 10.

9. *the grave*] Or, **Sheol**, the world below, the world of the departed. See Gen. xxxvii. 35. It is important to keep in mind that this word is distinguished from the grave. Whether or not personal consciousness was believed to remain, the individuality of the living principle was recognized as permanent by nations with whose opinions Job must have been fully conversant.

10. *He shall return no more to his house*] It is somewhat remarkable in reference to this passage, that the Egyptians believed if a man were justified in Hades, and had learned thoroughly certain chapters of the Ritual during life, he would have power to come forth any day at his wish and *return to his own house*. See 'Todtenbuch,' ch. 1. p. 163, in Dr Birch's translation, and Lepsius, 'Aelteste Texte.' For the last clause cf. Ps. ciii. 16.

11—21. The expostulation or remonstrance of Job.

12. *a whale*] Or, **monster**. The general meaning is clear. Job complains that he, a creature of God, capable of understanding and obeying an appeal to conscience, should be dealt with as the sea and its monsters, kept only from ravaging the earth by fixed laws or severe restraint. The word "sea" is, however, specially used of the Nile (see Isai. xix. 5), whose overflowing was carefully watched, and, though most welcome, was confined by dykes and reservoirs: and "tannin" (translated whale, A.V.) is applied frequently to the crocodile, the recognized type of fierce and untameable monsters. Tanem is in fact an Egyptian word with a similar meaning; see note on Exod. vii. 9. The constant reference to Egyptian imagery in this book makes this interpretation, long since proposed, and adopted lately by Delitzsch and others, very probable.

14. *with dreams*] Avicenna notes melancholy dreams as common symptoms in elephantiasis.

15. *strangling*] A reference to the sensation of choking, of suffocation, noted also as a symptom of the disease. Job prefers even this suffering to the misery of such dreams. The word has been supposed to suggest suicide, but there is no trace whatever of such a temptation; it was utterly alien to the spirit of Job.

my life] **my bones**, as in the margin; that is, this worn-out frame, this mere skeleton of my former self. See Note below.

16. *let me alone*] Or, **cease from me**, depart from me: a great word, which implies that the continuance of life depends on God's presence; that withdrawn, comes death; see Ps. civ. 29.

are vanity] Or, a mere breath, a passing vapour.

est magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?

18 And *that* thou shouldest visit him every morning, *and* try him every moment?

19 How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

20 I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?

21 And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I *shall* not *be*.

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17. *magnify him*] There is a bitter irony in this expression: that God should concern Himself so long, busy Himself, so to speak, with His creatures, implies in them a Titanic grandeur, so to speak, a relation of proportion, if not equality, between Him and them. There is a singular resemblance between this and the 8th Psalm; there God is said to magnify man by rich endowments of soul and body, here by the infliction of tortures, which imply godlike capacities of endurance.

19. *till I swallow down*, &c.] A proverbial expression, common in Arabic, for a moment of time, equivalent to "the twinkling of an eye." It may be here suggested by the feeling of suffocation, the distressing gasping of the diseased throat in elephantiasis. See *v.* 15.

20, 21. The last objection is dealt with here—"I have sinned," that is, granted that I have committed some sin, what then? Is it in my power now to make any compensation, to live and act for God's service?

20. *O thou preserver of men*] There is no irony in this, but a touching appeal. Job does but contrast what he now experiences with what he believes and knows of God's providential goodness and care of His creatures. "Preserver" cannot (as some assume) be taken in a bad sense, as watcher, observing in order to punish, though the appeal involves a tone of reproachfulness.

a mark] A butt or target at which the "arrows of the Almighty" (see chap. vi. 4) are aimed, or an object with which God Himself comes into collision, which He assails by repeated shocks.

a burden to myself] At once weighed down by the accumulated pressure of woes, and inwardly exhausted by the poison which the spirit has absorbed, vi. 4. There is another reading which gives a forcible sense, "As though I were a burden to thee," an object which God would fain cast off: thus LXX. and Syr., and, of course, Merx: but the reading and translation of our A.V. are probably correct.

21. These last words exactly express the real state of Job's mind at the time. He does not deny that he may have sinned, but, conscious of integrity and piety, with an honest and truthful sense that he has done his duty to God and man, he cannot understand why he should be an object of God's wrath, why his sins of infirmity should not be pardoned. In one very important point he and his friends were agreed; both alike falsely regarded his afflictions as indications of God's displeasure; they at once concluding that his refusal to submit proved radical unsoundness, while he is driven to utter perplexity and hopelessness. The solution of the problem involved two conditions, one of which was as yet beyond the reach of either party: first, the certainty that all punishments falling on God's true servants are directed by His wisdom and controlled by His power; and, secondly, the knowledge of a future state, in which the living Redeemer will rectify all inequalities. Each step in the discussion brings the necessity of such a solution nearer.

in the morning] The idiom simply expresses earnest or careful seeking, as in Prov. vii. 15, and viii. 17. It does not therefore refer to the last day, as might be inferred from ch. xiv. 13—15.

NOTE on CHAP. VII. 15.

Merx renders "and my soul chooseth strangling, I despise death compared with my pains." But the substitution of pains for bones is purely conjectural; LXX., Symm., and Syr. have "bones." In *v.* 20, M. omits "thou preserver of men."

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *Bildad sheweth God's justice in dealing with men according to their works.* 8 *He allegeth antiquity to prove the certain destruction of the hypocrite.* 20 *He applieth God's just dealing to Job.*

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 How long wilt thou speak these *things?* and *how long shall* the words of thy mouth *be like* a strong wind?

3 [a] Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

4 If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away [†] for their transgression;

5 [b] If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

6 If thou *wert* pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

7 Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

8 [c] For inquire, I pray thee, of the

[a] Deut. 32. 4. 2 Chron. 19. 7. Dan. 9. 14.
[†] Heb. *in the hand of their transgression.*
[b] chap. 22. 23.
[c] Deut. 4. 32.

CHAP. VIII. The argument of Bildad the Shuhite rests upon the same principle as that of Eliphaz, but it touches more forcibly upon some points briefly indicated in the previous discourse, and the illustrations are novel and striking. There is vigour as well as ingenuity in the reasoning. Bildad feels aggrieved by Job's complaints, which involve the charge of injustice in God (2, 3), and, admitting hypothetically the possibility of the Patriarch's righteousness, he infers the guilt of his children who had perished, and the certainty of his own restoration to happiness, 4—7. In order to maintain the general principle that God never abandons the righteous, or gives permanent prosperity to evildoers, he adduces the authority of ancient and universal tradition, and quotes three similes, or proverbial sayings, of singular beauty. The discourse winds up with an assurance that, notwithstanding Job's belief that he "should no more see good," he would still be happy as well as prosperous, supposing that his confident assertions of integrity and piety are well founded.

1—7. The general argument in which Bildad assumes the guilt of Job's children, and the future restoration of the Patriarch on the supposition of his innocence.

2. *like a strong wind*] The word "like" should be omitted, and the clause rendered **for the words of thy mouth are a strong wind**, violent and unreasoning: an allusion to vi. 26.

3. *Doth God pervert judgment*] Bildad draws out the thought which underlay Job's complaints, or followed from them as a logical conclusion. The two words "judgment" and "justice" differ; the former denotes the act, the latter the principle. Cf. Gen. xviii. 25; Rom. iii. 5, 6.

4. *for their transgression*] The second clause means, **then He has given them up to their guilt**, lit. "to the hand of their guilt," that is, abandoned them to its consequences. The guilt of the children is thus represented both as the cause and instrument of their destruction. Both sin and punishment are put hypothetically, but, since their destruction was a fact, Bildad's argument assumes the certainty of their sin. Eliphaz had hinted this argument, see chap. iv. 11, and v. 4, but on the whole had attributed the children's ruin to their parent's guilt rather than their own. Bildad reverses the position, and gives it a turn even more painful to Job, though apparently less offensive to him personally. Dillm. points out the reference to chap. i. 19, a point of importance, contested by Knobel.

5. *If thou*] The word "thou" is emphatic; it marks the contrast between Job and his children. "Make supplication," the word so rendered means, "make God gracious to thyself," reconcile thyself to him, and him to thyself, by prayer.

Two conditions of restoration are proposed in this and the following verse: prayer to God and personal innocence: both conditions are just; but the statement involves a grave charge, since Job had not prayed in a spirit of submission, so far as Bildad knew, and the destruction of his children involved suffering, which was incompatible, in his mind, with the supposition of Job's innocence.

6. *awake for thee*] The waking up for defence of the righteous is frequently attributed to God; cf. Ps. xxxv. 23. Vulg. evigilabit ad te. The LXX. expresses the meaning which underlies the figure, ἐπακούσεταί σου.

the habitation of thy righteousness] The dwelling, which on the fulfilment of the two conditions above stated would be clear of guilt: *i.e.* in which thou hast lived righteously.

7. *Though*] Or **And**. The word "though" obscures the meaning, "So that thy beginning would be (comparatively) small, and thy latter state will be greatly enlarged." That Job's former estate, great as it really was, would be but small compared with that to which he would be raised on his restoration. The feigned anticipation turned out to be correct; see xlii. 12.

8—19. Appeal to antiquity. Bildad goes back to the remotest past, not merely to the ancestors of the race to which he and Job belonged, but to their forefathers, the original

former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

[d]Gen. 47. 9. 1 Chron. 29. 15. ch. 7. 6. Psal. 39. 5. & 144. 4. † Heb. *not.*

9 (For [d]we *are but of* yesterday, and know †nothing, because our days upon earth *are* a shadow:)

10 Shall not they teach thee, *and* tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

11 Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?

[e]Ps. 129. 6. Jer. 17. 6.

12 [e]Whilst it *is* yet in his greenness, *and* not cut down, it withereth before any *other* herb.

13 So *are* the paths of all that forget God; and the [f]hypocrite's hope shall perish:

[f]chap. 11. 20. & 18. 14. Ps. 112. 10. Prov. 10. 28. † Heb. *a spider's house.*

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust *shall be* †a spider's web.

15 He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

16 He *is* green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

17 His roots are wrapped about the heap, *and* seeth the place of stones.

18 If he destroy him from his place, then *it* shall deny him, *saying*, I have not seen thee.

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founders of human society. He quotes old sayings, which may have been preserved by oral tradition: but inscriptions and papyri inculcating moral lessons existed in Egypt at a much earlier age than that of Job, or even of Abraham. See the second of the select papyri published by the Trustees of the British Museum. Bildad's speech indicates special familiarity with Egypt: see note on *v.* 11.

8. *prepare thyself*, &c.] Or, **attend to the research of their fathers**; *i.e.* the results of the investigations of those who in length of days and wisdom far transcended their descendants.

9. *a shadow*] Cf. xiv. 2; Ps. cii. 11. The reason thus assigned for the inferiority of Job's contemporaries in experience and wisdom evidently points to the longevity of the early patriarchal age.

10. *out of their heart*] The seat of deep convictions founded on sound knowledge: Bildad contrasts such words with those of Job—mere wind, as he calls them, *v.* 2.

11. This verse seems to give the proverb in the form in which it reached Bildad. The following verses contain the explanation and the application to Job. It is remarkable that the words, which elsewhere occur only in the Pentateuch and in Isaiah, xviii. 2, and xix. 7, in connection with Egypt, are Egyptian: "rush," "grow," and "flag" are exact transcriptions of words explained in the Appendix of the first volume (pp. 484, 485), and have no Hebrew or Semitic etymology. It seems difficult to resist the inference that the proverb was originally Egyptian.

The points of comparison are two; the luxuriant growth of the water-plants, and their sudden and complete decay; having no substance in themselves they perish instantly when the water is withdrawn. See Note below.

12. *and not cut down*] *i.e.* although it be not cut down. Thus the heaviest calamities of Job were not the result of human agencies, but, as the Patriarch himself doubted not, a Divine visitation.

13. *paths*] Probably "latter end." See Note below.

hypocrite's] The word, which occurs frequently in Job, means rather a **profane**, godless man: cf. xiii. 16; xv. 34; xvii. 8.

14. *a spider's web*] rather **house**; it is as a house, not as a web, that it supplies a comparison, still common in the East, of sudden prosperity resting on no secure foundation. Thus Koran, Sur. 29, *v.* 40. "The likeness of those who choose patrons beside God is the likeness of a spider, which maketh herself **a house**." The next verse brings out another point of resemblance with Job in the desperate and useless struggles of the creature to keep together its shattered domicile.

16. *He is green before the sun*] A third simile is introduced. The hypocrite is here compared to a parasitical weed, green, full of sap at sunrise, spreading itself rapidly over its garden, taking as it were possession of it as its own. In ch. xxiv. 8, for "green" A.V. has "wet."

17. *His roots*] Or, **Its roots are twined about a heap, it seeth a house of stones**. The weed is rooted in a heap of stones, in which it seems to have a perfectly safe home, a house of stones. The word "house" is important; cf. note *v.* 14. See Note below.

18. *If he*, &c.] He, *i.e.* God. Bildad does not name, but undoubtedly indicates the destroyer. It weakens the passage to render impersonally, "it is destroyed." The same meaning, however, is suggested if we take this verse as continuing the simile; if one destroy, whether it be the owner of the garden or the gardener, is a matter indifferent: one thing only is certain, destruction comes sooner or later upon the useless and noisome weed.

from his place] This refers evidently to the words of Job, vii. 10. Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 10.

19 Behold, this *is* the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

20 Behold, God will not cast away a perfect *man*, neither will he †help the evil doers:

† Heb. *take the ungodly by the hand.*

21 Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with †rejoicing.

† Heb. *shouting for joy.*

22 They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked †shall come to nought.

† Heb. *shall not be.*

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it shall deny him] As though the very stones were ashamed of their occupant; it was a disgrace to the place where it grew, all traces of it are removed.

19. *the joy of his way*] *i.e.* such is the result of its triumphant career.

shall others grow] His removal is needed to make way for a better race. The word implies a prosperous growth.

20. *a perfect man*] The word is used with special reference to Job's character; see ch. i. 1.

help the evil doers] Or, **neither will he grasp the hand of evil doers**; he will not hold them up firmly, though he may leave them for a season in a state of apparent prosperity. Thus Aquila and Theodotion.

21. *Till he fill*] The expression is elliptical. If Job be perfect, then God will not leave him till He fill, &c.

rejoicing] Or, as in the margin, "shouting for joy."

22. *clothed with shame*] Cf. Ps. xxxv. 26. Bildad, arguing always on the feigned assumption of Job's innocence, apparently identifies his enemies with the wicked; but, under the cover of accepting that position he winds up the whole argument with a declaration of the principles which, in his mind, necessarily involved the condemnation of a man who should be irretrievably ruined.

The general tone of the speech differs from that of Eliphaz. It is less dignified, with little pretence to original thought, and an almost slavish deference to old prejudices; while again it is fully as offensive in principle, it is not so straightforward. Bildad implies, or indeed asserts, a hope which he does not feel, and thus, under the semblance of consolation, deals the heaviest blow, attributing the destruction of Job's children to their own guilt.

NOTES on CHAP. VIII. 11, 13, and 17.

11. The first word גמא is Egyptian, kam, or gam, Coptic id., see Brugsch, 'Dictionnaire Hiéroglyphique,' p. 1452; it is the papyrus, cyperus papyrus, or papyrus nilotica; LXX. *πάπυρος*: the second גאה Egypt. ka, or ga, "to be tall, high, &c." Br. 'D. H.' p. 1435; the third אחו, *ἄχι*, (here LXX. *βούτομον*), a more general term for the vegetation of marshy districts, on which Pharaoh's fat kine fed.

13. Paths, LXX. *ἔσχατα*, "the latter end;" adopted by Merx, sc. אחרית for ארחות, an almost certain emendation.

17. Merx alters אבנים into ביתר אִבִּים, "an abundance of growth." This is a conjecture not likely to be adopted; but it is somewhat remarkable that he should have selected a word probably of Egyptian origin: sc. ab, ear of corn, or a flower. Birch, 'D. H.' p. 361.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Job, acknowledging God's justice, sheweth there is no contending with him.* 22 *Man's innocency is not to be condemned by afflictions.*

THEN Job answered and said,

2 I know *it is* so of a truth: but how should [a] man be just †with God?

[a] Ps. 143. 2.

† Or, *before God?*

3 If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

4 *He is* wise in heart, and mighty

CHAP. IX. **1—4.** The answer to Bildad's argument that calamities are the result and punishment of sin.

2. *of a truth*] The word has a covert sarcasm; of course, Job says, I know that—of course I do not pretend to be able to prove that God is unjust or that I am just. There is much bitterness in this; without denying the proposition that God doth not pervert judgment, he asserts that Bildad has said nothing which proves it and clears up the mystery. Job reduces all the argument to one fact, that between man and God there is no possibility of reciprocal justice. Man cannot establish his justice, for strong as his cause may be, it will not stand an instant before God.

3. *If he will contend*] Or, **If a man should desire to contend with Him.** If man should wish to plead his own cause,

in strength: who hath hardened *himself* against him, and hath prospered?

5 Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

6 Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.

7 Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars.

8 [b]Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the [†]waves of the sea.

9 [c]Which maketh [†]Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.

10 [d]Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

11 Lo, he goeth by me, and I see *him* not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.

12 [e]Behold, he taketh away, [†]who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

13 *If* God will not withdraw his

[b] Gen. 1. 6.
† Heb. *heights*
[c] chap. 38. 31, &c. Amos 5. 8.
† Heb. *Ash, Cesil, and Cimah.*
[d] chap. 5. 9
[e] Isai. 45. 9. Jer. 18. 6. Rom. 9. 20.
† Heb. *who can turn him away?*

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he will not be able to meet one out of a thousand charges, which infinite wisdom might adduce, and infinite power would punish. Job thus admits a relative and inherent injustice or sinfulness in himself, but only that which he has in common with his fellow-men, thereby answering the insinuations of his false friends, and in reality vindicating himself from the charge of special guilt, supposed to be brought to light and demonstrated by his terrible punishment.

4. *He is*] These two words should be omitted, **Wise in heart, and mighty in strength!**

5—13. In this grand description of God's majesty Job's immediate object is to establish the utter hopelessness of attempts to explain and vindicate His ways.

5. *and they know not*] *i.e.* suddenly and unexpectedly, when there is no indication of storm or danger, the earthquake overthrows them.

in his anger] A covert insinuation, if not of injustice, at least of incomprehensible movements in the Divine will. Once look on natural phenomena, of which the causes are hidden, as indications of special emotions in the Godhead, and the way is open for erroneous conceptions of His dealings with His creatures.

6. *the pillars thereof*] See ch. xxvi. 11; Ps. lxxv. 3. The vast mountain-ranges, whose roots are regarded as the foundation of continents, and on whose summits the firmament appears to rest.

7. *the sun*] The Hebrew word is archaic, and occurs rarely.

it riseth not] Or, "shineth not;" the Heb. applies specially to the light of the sun.

sealeth up] With dense clouds.

8. *waves*] The Hebrew has "the heights," *i.e.* the mountainous waves.

9. *Arcturus*] The constellation called "the Bear." The Hebrew name (Ash, or, as xxxviii. 32, Aish) was derived in all probability from the Chaldæans, but the exact meaning is uncertain. Ew. compares the Arab. ayuth, a lion.

Orion] The original word means "fool." There may be an allusion in it to old mythological tradition, which probably represented the leader of rebellion against God as suspended in heaven, bound in chains (cf. xxxviii. 31), an object of scorn and of warning to the Universe. The legend which connects it with Nimrod is of late origin. It does not follow that the tradition was accepted by Job, though it involves a great truth dimly made known in primeval revelation.

Pleiades] The Hebrew, as also the modern Arabic name for this constellation, means a heap, or group of stars. Cf. ch. xxxviii. 31; Amos v. 8.

chambers of the south] The vast spaces and constellations of the southern heavens. Dillmann observes that the author, a man who must have travelled much, would probably be aware that the farther one goes southward the more numerous are the stars and constellations visible in the heavens. There is no sufficient ground to assume a reference to the southern hemisphere, first known, apparently, in the time of Pharaoh Necho.

10. Job accepts and repeats the words of Eliphaz, ch. v. 9. He agrees with the premiss, but not with the conclusion. God's unsearchableness does not in his mind justify the assertion of the absolute rectitude of His judgments, if this life be taken as the whole; it simply makes discussion useless.

11. *he passeth on also*] Job again uses the same word which Eliphaz had done, speaking of a ghostly or spiritual visitation ch. iv. 15, but he says, it may not be without a certain sarcasm, that as for himself *he* receives no answer or intimation; to him all is dark, fathomless, inexplicable in the divine visitation.

13. *If God will not*, &c.] Rather, **God withdraweth not His wrath, the helpers of Rahab are prostrate under**

† Heb. *helpers of pride*, or, *strength*.

anger, the †proud helpers do stoop under him.

14 How much less shall I answer him, *and* choose out my words *to reason* with him?

15 Whom, though I were righteous, *yet* would I not answer, *but* I would make supplication to my judge.

16 If I had called, and he had answered me; *yet* would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.

17 For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.

18 He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.

19 If *I speak* of strength, lo, *he is* strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time *to plead?*

20 If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: *if I say*, I *am* perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

Him. The meaning of the last clause is disputed, but the most probable explanation is that Job refers, as in ch. xxvi. 12, 13, to the ancient belief that a monstrous being was overthrown together with his helpers in a struggle against God. The term Rahab is frequently applied to Egypt (Is. xxx. 7, where it is rendered "strength;" li. 9; cf. Ps. lxxxvii. 4; lxxxix. 10), not however as a proper name, but as a characteristic appellative. Its true meaning is pride, or violence, and it may have had the definite signification of Rebel in ancient traditions. The universal prevalence of the belief is admitted by all; in Egypt the Typhonian principle is specially represented by Apophis, the monster serpent opposed to the Deities of light and life, Ra and Osiris. In the oldest Indian myths, representing the traditions of the Aryans before their dispersion, Vritra, the personification of darkness, called Dasya, the Destroyer, the arch-enemy, *together with his helpers* fights against Indra, the God of light, who overthrows him and bears the name Destroyer of Vritra. It ought not to be questioned that such traditions, held by nations which from the remotest period were separated from each other, are but more or less distorted reminiscences of the earliest revelation to man; nor is there any reason to suppose that Job derived them from any source but that of patriarchal tradition; supposing, as Ew. and other commentators admit, that the expression in this verse is to be taken in its obvious and proper sense. There is no sufficient ground for the assumption (Ew., Hirz., Ren.), though not in itself an improbable one, that Rahab was the name of a constellation, representing the punishment of the monster, fastened like Orion to heaven, "enchaîné au ciel avec tous ses compagnons." Renan.

14. *much less shall I*] If all powers of earth and heaven are unable to stand against Him, how then could I?

15. *my judge*] Or, my adversary; the person who contends with me in judgment: (thus Dillmann, Field, 'Hex.'). Job means that, were he conscious of perfect innocence, the might and wisdom of his adversary would leave him no option but supplication; the same word which is used by Bildad, ch. viii. 5.

16. The meaning of this verse is: If God really answered my appeal, and permitted me to stand at the bar, and plead my cause against Him, I could not rely upon His hearing me; for that would involve an inconceivable condescension. Job, it must be noted, does not either renounce God, or his own integrity, but he trenches on the grievous sin of imputing to Him a real disregard of justice. Such words must not be taken as a deliberate conclusion, but partly as the wanderings of a maddened and embittered spirit (see vi. 3), partly as the struggles of a perplexed mind.

17. *For*] Lit. Who; but our translation preserves the sense. Job argues that God would not hearken to his supplication, from the fact that He now pursues him with unceasing calamities.

he breaketh me] Or, crushes me. Renan, "qui fond sur moi." The same word is used Gen. iii. 15, where A. V. has "bruise." The meaning is probably a sudden and violent stroke. Cf. Rœdiger, 'Ges. Th.' p. 1380.

19. *If I speak of strength*] The verse is obscure, but may probably mean, Is it a question of strength, who is mighty? (the Almighty answers) Behold! *it is I*. Is it a question of judgment? (God again speaks), who will appoint me a day?

20—24. These verses assert a great truth, but in a spirit which makes it a virtual untruth. From the certain truth that all men are guilty in God's sight, equally unable to resist His power or to sustain His judgment, Job draws the false inference that they are all involved in one condemnation, those who in a true, though relative, sense are perfect, and those who are altogether wicked.

20. *mine own mouth*] *i.e.* God would detect flaws in any arguments I might use, and indications or proofs of guilt in any assertions of innocence. Renan understands

21 *Though* I *were* perfect, *yet* would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.

22 This *is* one *thing*, therefore I said *it*, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

23 If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, *and* who *is* he?

25 Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good.

26 They are passed away as the †‖swift ships: as the eagle *that* hasteth to the prey.

27 If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort *myself*:

† Heb. *ships of desire.* ‖ Or, *ships of Ebeh.*

Job to say that his own mouth would betray him, by uttering the contrary of what he wishes to say. Merx reads "His mouth," but *against* the LXX.

21. The last climax. The clause rendered literally stands thus: **I perfect—I know not myself—I abhor my life**, which may be understood to mean I am guiltless; my integrity is an immoveable fact. I am at a loss to understand my own feelings, my own nature, or I care not for myself, am indifferent as to any punishment which may be inflicted upon me, **I abhor my life**. It seems a state of mind incompatible with faith in God, but it does but bring Job nearer to the only true solution of the problem; and it must be remembered that St Paul says, "If in this life only we have hope we are of all men the most miserable" (1 Cor. xv. 19). Holy Scripture knows nothing of that stoic grandeur of self-reliance which can dispense with the assurance of God's love.

22. *This is one thing*] The expression is obscure, but means probably, It is one and the same thing with all (*i.e.* there is no difference whether a man be innocent or not, Del.), therefore I say it openly, God destroys alike the perfect and the wicked. A terrible statement, but one which cannot be gainsaid, without reference to a future compensation. As God here makes His rain to fall alike on the just and the unjust, so "there is one event to the righteous and the wicked," Eccles. ix. 2. The more distinctly this is established the fuller the preparation for Him Who brought life and immortality to light. If Job had been only called upon to submit, to leave his cause in God's hand, he might have been content, but the arguments of his friends leave him no option but either to acknowledge guilt, of which he is not conscious, or to dispute the doctrine of perfect equity in God's temporal government.

23. *If the scourge slay suddenly*] *i.e.* a scourge, pestilence, famine, or war, falling suddenly on a land, destroying at once the guilty and the innocent.

the trial] *i.e.* not the "distress," but the perplexity, the **temptation** which besets them to question His goodness and wisdom. Jerome says truly, "there is in the whole book nothing harsher than this;" it is a Titanic outbreak of unutterable woe. Dillmann questions the meaning "temptation" as inappropriate; but the etym. is clear, and the sense exceedingly forcible.

24. *he covereth*] So that they cannot discern between good and evil; the wrong is not merely committed with impunity, but altogether escapes the notice of those whose duty it is to administer justice. The second clause should be rendered, **if *it be* not *He*, who then is it?**

25—35. The rapidity with which life fleets away, and the greatness of his sorrows, make it impossible for Job to accept consolation; while the certainty of his condemnation, should he appeal for justice, makes expostulation or defence utterly useless; what he needs is an **umpire**, a daysman, standing between him and God, and a cessation of the infliction and terrors of Divine wrath; then he might plead his cause without fear of the result. Thus in the very depth of misery there comes (not indeed a hope, but) an aspiration for a MEDIATOR, "Arbiter ad componendam causam." St Augustine. See Chalmers' fine sermon on this passage.

25. *post*] Lit. "a runner," *i.e.* the couriers, who convey despatches in the desert with proverbial rapidity. Cf. 2 Chron. xxx. 6.

26. *swift ships*] The original has "ships of Ebeh," a word of doubtful origin and meaning, probably "of reed;" such as were used commonly in Egypt, and were famed for their speed. Isaiah speaks of them, xviii. 2. The word may be connected with the old Egyptian *ua*, a ship or bark; the u and b are interchangeable. Job takes thus three similes: the swift runner by land, the swift bark by water, the eagle swooping through the air.

hasteth] Or, swoops upon its prey; the word chosen is special, not general. It occurs in no other passage, but in Syriac it is applied to the swift flight of the eagle.

27. *my heaviness*] This gives the true sense of the forcible but untranslateable origi-

28 I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

29 *If* I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?

30 If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;

31 Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall ‖abhor me.

32 For *he is* not a man, as I *am*, *that* I should answer him, *and* we should come together in judgment.

33 Neither is there †any ‖daysman betwixt us, *that* might lay his hand upon us both.

34 Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me:

35 *Then* would I speak, and not fear him; †but *it is* not so with me.

‖Or, *make me to be abhorred.*

†Heb. *one that should argue.* ‖Or, *umpire.*

†Heb. *but I am not so with myself.*

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nal, lit. faces, that is, gloomy, downcast looks. See Note below.

28. *of all my sorrows*] Or, by reason of my sorrows. The sorrows in which Job sees proofs of God's wrath terrify him, and make it impossible for him to feel comfort.

29. *If I be wicked*] Or, **I am to be guilty**, *i.e.* no other result but condemnation is to be looked for; guilty or innocent, as I may be, compared with other men, I must be convicted, why then take bootless trouble?

30. The last words should be rendered, "and make my hands **clean with lye**," *i.e.* potash: cf. Isai. i. 25; Jer. ii. 22. The thought suggested is, that Job could really clear himself of guilt, but that his justification would be useless; it would not stand God's judgment. In this, as throughout the passage, there is the recognition of a real and universal truth, but partially understood, and perverted by natural passion and infirmity. Job has a right, so far as regards his friends, to maintain his integrity; on the other hand, he is right in believing that no human being can be held innocent in God's sight; but the former conviction is bound up with feelings which need chastening, the latter leads him to the inference that moral differences are disregarded by the Almighty.

31. *shall abhor me*] Job represents himself as stript and naked in the trial, thoroughly cleansed by his own conscience, but then cast by the Divine power and wisdom into a foul pit, an object so loathsome, that his own garments refuse, so to speak, to clothe him again. The marg. is less forcible.

32. In this and the next verse two conditions are stated, without which true justice between God and man is impossible. God must become man, or, there must be a mediator between both, representing both, and fully empowered to arbitrate between them. This, of course, does not involve an anticipation of the fulfilment of both conditions in Christ, but it expresses the natural, inherent, ineradicable longing of man's heart, which asserts itself most powerfully in the noblest spirits, and has been ever developed by suffering. For Christians the most striking feature of this book, that which gives it the most special interest, is that it expresses the truest yearnings of the heart which are satisfied by the Saviour.

33. *daysman*] *i.e.* an umpire, empowered to decide the cause by mutual consent, and "to lay hands," with authority to enforce the sentence and to compel submission. We know that "God hath committed all judgment to the Son," and that "because He is the Son of man;" the fulfilment of an aspiration which was a true though unconscious prophecy. Instead of not (*lo*) the LXX. have εἴθε (*lu*) "would that:" a probable rendering, adopted of course by Merx.

34. This verse may be rendered, **Who would remove His rod from me, so that His fear should not terrify me?** Thus Merx. This suits the context, and represents truly the work of the Daysman.

35. The latter clause should be rendered, as in the margin, **For** (not *but*) **I am not so with myself**, *i.e.* I am not such a man in my own consciousness. Compare St Paul's saying, 1 Cor. iv. 4, "for I know nothing by myself (οὐδὲν ἐμαυτῷ σύνοιδα, am not conscious of doing wrong), yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord." A similar idiom occurs 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

NOTE on CHAP. IX. 27.

Merx would transpose the words and render, "I will leave it (*i.e.* my complaint) and cheer my countenance." This is unnecessary and the word "comfort" (*abligah*, which occurs x. 20 and Ps. xxxix. 13, where A.V. has "recover strength,") is in both passages intransitive. The Arabic etymology which Merx suggests is valuable. *Balaju'* is the space between the eyebrows, *ablaj-ul-wajhi*, I will clear my face, cease to frown.

CHAPTER X.

1 Job, taking liberty of complaint, expostulateth with God about his afflictions. 18 *He complaineth of life, and craveth a little ease before death.*

MY soul is [1]weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

[1] Or, *cut off while I live.*

2 I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

3 *Is it* good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise [†]the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

[†] Heb. *the labour of thine hands.*

4 Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?

5 *Are* thy days as the days of man? *are* thy years as man's days,

6 That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

7 [†]Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and *there is* none that can deliver out of thine hand.

[†] Heb. It is *upon thy knowledge.*

8 Thine hands [†]have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.

[†] Heb. *took pains about me.*

9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

10 [a]Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?

[a] Psal. 139. 14, 15, 16.

11 Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast [†]fenced me with bones and sinews.

[†] Heb. *hedged.*

CHAP. X. **1—7.** An expostulation with God. Job pleads for justice, on the fourfold ground that he is God's creature, that God cannot be subject to human infirmities, that He knows Job's innocence, and that no other deliverer is conceivable. This appeal, though full of bitterness and passion, shews the depth of Job's inner conviction: far from renouncing God, all that he desires is that God would manifest His true attributes, and shew Himself as He is.

1. *My soul is weary*] This translation is correct; the marginal emendation, *cut off*, refers to a derivation of the Hebrew word now generally rejected. In Ezek. vi. 9, the A. V. has "shall loathe themselves."

I will leave] Or, "I will let loose my complaint over myself;" *i.e.* I will say what my grief prompts without restraint. For "myself," LXX. has "on Him." "I will give free course to my complaint concerning Him." Thus Merx. It facilitates the construction, and may possibly be the true reading.

2. *Do not condemn me*] The rendering gives the true meaning; lit. "do not make me (or treat me as) wicked," with general reference to the preceding chapter, and specially to *v.* 29. The LXX. take it in the sense of tempting to sin, μή με ἀσεβεῖν δίδασκε.

3. *counsel of the wicked*] This refers to ch. ix. 24. Job thus condenses three charges in this single verse; oppression of the innocent, disregard of God's own work (cf. *v.* 8), and success granted to evildoers. In the first clause LXX. ἀδικήσω: but the text is better.

4—6. The force of this argument rests upon Job's conviction that God is omniscient, and from everlasting to everlasting; so that, in fact, its very audacity proves inner faith.

4. *eyes of flesh*] The two words, "flesh" and "man," (enosh), are specially used to express human infirmity. Cf. Joh. viii. 15; 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

7. *Thou knowest*] Or, **Although Thou knowest.** The appeal to God's knowledge of his heart may remind us of St Peter's repeated appeal to his Master's knowledge of his love (John xxi. 15—17). A man who realizes that knowledge, and finds in it a support and ground of confidence, who, at the same time, looks for no other deliverer, "has the root of the matter in him."

8—13. Appeal to God as Creator.

8. The processes of nature are always attributed in Scripture to the immediate action of God. The formation of every individual stands, in the language of the Holy Ghost, precisely on the same footing as that of the first man. See Note below.

9. *as the clay*] *i.e.* potter's clay, as the potter makes a vase; a simile frequently used by Isaiah, xxix. 16, xlv. 9, lxiv. 8: cf. Rom. ix. 21—23. Cf. ch. iv. 19.

10. The formation of the embryo is a mystery on which the Hebrew dwells with a deep and reverential awe: cf. Ps. cxxxix. 13—16. The similes here used are familiar to the readers of Oriental poetry, especially of the Koran.

11. *fenced me*] Neither this nor the marginal reading, "hedged," gives the true sense: it should be, **hast woven me**; thus we use the word "texture" or "muscular tissue." The same word, with a slight variation of form, is used Ps. cxxxix. 13. With a different construction it means "hedged." Cf. i. 10; Hosea ii. 6.

12 Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

13 And these *things* hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this *is* with thee.

14 If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

15 If I be wicked, woe unto me; and *if* I be righteous, *yet* will I not lift up my head. *I am* full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction;

16 For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me.

17 Thou renewest [1]thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war *are* against me.

18 [b]Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

19 I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

20 [c]*Are* not my days few? cease *then*, *and* let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,

21 Before I go *whence* I shall not return, *even* to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;

[1] That is, *thy plagues*.

[b] chap. 3. 11.

[c] See chap. 7. 6. & 8. 9.

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12. *life and favour*] By "favour" is meant specially loving and providential care, not "grace." Job is speaking of his former state of temporal happiness, which he attributes wholly to God's favour.

13—22. The contrast between former happiness and present misery leads Job to suppose that all along the purposes of God must have been mysteriously and inexplicably directed towards his destruction; every sin is visited, no pardon is vouchsafed, all righteousness is disregarded; though in the midst of the despair there is a breath of prayer which tells of inner life, *v.* 15, yet his soul is full of bitterness; the wrath of God indicated by heavy woes seems to go on increasing; Job hopes and asks only for a little respite, before the end of all comes in the dark chaotic state of death.

13. *hid in thine heart*] As though all the favour were a mere semblance, the hidden purpose seems to Job now the only truth.

this is with thee] Rather, "this was with thee." Job is speaking of the past, even when life and happiness were given, the purpose of taking both away was with God.

14. Or, **If I sinned, then Thou didst watch me, and wouldest not cleanse me from mine iniquity,** *i.e.* "whatever sin I might commit, it was Thy intention to watch and record it, and not to cleanse me from my guilt." Here, again, the words represent an inner travail of spirit, a struggle between the consciousness of sin, which Job never disguises, and the feeling that the sin, not being wilful, was not sufficient to account for his sufferings.

15. *therefore see thou mine affliction*] This rendering, though questioned, is accepted by good scholars (Rosen., de W., Merx), and gives a good and touching sense, an ejaculatory prayer in accordance with other intimations of inner life. It may, however, be rendered, "full of confusion, and seeing my misery;" like Him of whom Job was a type, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. In that case the punctuation would have to be altered, or an adjectival form assumed, which, though in accordance with grammatical law, does not occur elsewhere.

16. *For it increaseth*] Rather, **And should my head lift itself up, Thou wouldst hunt me like a lion,** watching the least movements of its prey, and prepared to rush upon it when it should stir. The construction, however, is hard. Merx reads, "Yet as a lion, which springs up, Thou huntest me." The latter clause is in the same tone, "and again Thou wouldest deal marvellously with me," *i.e.* inflict marvellous and inexplicable plagues, devised, so to speak, with marvellous skill to complete my discomfiture. Vulg. "reversus mirabiliter me crucias:" thus Hirz., Dill., &c.

17. Thou wouldst call up new witnesses against me; that is, calamities which would be regarded by all as attesting guilt.

changes and war] Lit. "changes and a host," *i.e.* **host upon host.** Job varies the figure; God is to him now an inexorable judge, now a bitter enemy taking advantage of every opportunity, and now the King of terrors, sending all His forces against him.

18. Job thus repeats his first wish, adopting as it were deliberately, after full consideration of all God's dealings, the words which he had once admitted to be the idle wanderings and ravings of a maddened spirit. Cf. iii. and vi. 3.

21, 22. Job accumulates epithets to express the sense of utter blackness and desola-

22 A land of darkness, as darkness *itself*; *and* of the shadow of death, without any order, and *where* the light *is* as darkness.

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tion of the state which he deliberately prefers to life in misery—each word has its peculiar horror: darkness (חשך, Gen. i. 2), such as was on the face of the waters before light was; "shadow of death," a word originally meaning "deep shade," but modified in form and signification so as to express the blackness of death; then returning to the same thought, and bringing out its full significance, "a land gloomy as blackness itself, the blackness of the shadow of death;" then the "without order," the return, as it were, to chaotic disorder, the *tohu* and *bohu* preceding creation; last of all, the darkness which, as it were, radiates a hideous mockery of sunlight, no mere privation of light, but an aggressive and active power opposed to the abodes lightened by God's presence and favour. Here, again, we feel how important it was that the utter blankness of a death without sensation, followed by no awakening, should be realized, in order that the mind might, in its recoil, grasp the hope of immortality, and that the instinct should be developed, which pointed to it even in the minds of heathens. It is important to note that this view of the state after death is altogether Hebrew, or, to speak more accurately, Semitic; it has nothing in it derived from or connected with the opinions current in Egypt, it is wholly divested of the superstitious inventions, but it is also without the moonlight of hope, which cheered the heathen with a shadowy Elysium; it is simply the realization of utter emptiness, a result in which it was impossible that the mind could rest, and which prepared it for the full disclosure of "a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," 1 Pet. i. 3.

NOTE on CHAP. x. 8.

For יחד סביב, LXX. μετὰ ταῦτα μεταβαλών. Merx, אחר תשוב, "At the end wilt Thou again destroy me?" But see Ps. cxxxix. 5.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Zophar reproveth Job for justifying himself.* 5 *God's wisdom is unsearchable.* 13 *The assured blessing of repentance.*

THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should † a man full of talk be justified?

3 Should thy ‖ lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

4 For thou hast said, My doctrine *is* pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

† Heb. *a man of lips.*

‖ Or, *devices.*

CHAP. XI. First discourse of Zophar the Naamathite. He pursues the same line of argument with the previous speakers, but with less dignity and earnestness than Eliphaz, less vigour and ingenuity than Bildad. 1—4, He expresses indignation at the vehemence, and what appears to him the falsehood, and scornful irony of Job's words; 5—6, He wishes that God should refute the twofold claim to purity of doctrine and innocence of life, and asserts that Job's punishment would prove to be even less than his crime were the truth made known. This assertion is the only *new* point in his discourse. 7—12, He meets Job's objections to the righteousness of God's dealings by asserting their unsearchableness; whatever His visitations may be, they are founded on His insight into man's heart, and are intended to bring about a complete reformation. 13, If His chastisements bring about a change of heart attested by such reformation, and by devout prayer, and the iniquity and wickedness, which are assumed, be put away, then guilt would be pardoned, peace granted, misery quite forgotten, and followed by a bright and secure old age, ending with a peaceful and hopeful rest. Persistence in wickedness, on the other hand, can but issue in darkness and despair.

3. *lies*] or **boastings**: the word occurs in the same sense in Isaiah xvi. 6; and Jer. xlviii. 30. The allusion is to such expressions as ix. 21, 35; x. 7. The corresponding word in Syriac means "idle talk."

mockest] Alluding to Job's contemptuous disregard of his friends' argument.

4. *doctrine*] The word means a point which a man takes up and adopts as a principle. It occurs very frequently in Proverbs, *e.g.* i. 5, iv. 2, vii. 21, where A.V. has "fair speech." Also in Deut. xxxii. 2, and Isai. xxix. 24. The expression is very forcible and indicates a growing consciousness that the dispute turns upon questions of fundamental principle.

5 But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

6 And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that *they are* double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee *less* than thine iniquity *deserveth*.

7 Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

8 *It is* [†]as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

[†] Heb. *the heights of heaven.*

9 The measure thereof *is* longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

10 If he [‖]cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then [†]who can hinder him?

[‖] Or, *make a change.*
[†] Heb. *who can turn him away?*

11 For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider *it?*

12 For [†]vain man would be wise, though man be born *like* a wild ass's colt.

[†] Heb. *empty.*

13 If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

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5. This refers to Job's desire (x. 2). Zophar wishes that it may really be answered, in order to confute Job.

6. *that they are double to that which is*] Or, **they are double in substance**; the meaning of this rather obscure expression appears to be, for they far excel not only Job's words, but all conceivable arguments in weight and substance, *i.e.* they have an absolute and essential excellence compared with which all human wisdom is as nothing; or, it may be, far more profound and weighty than Job can conceive; thus Dillm., Fürst. See note on ch. v. 12, and xxxix. 17, where A.V. has "wisdom."

Know therefore, &c.] Literally, "and know that God forgets for thee (remits to thee) *part* of thy guilt," *i.e.* so far from exacting more than Job owes, or inflicting more than he deserves, He actually passes over a large part of his transgressions. Cf. Ezra ix. 13. Zophar thus exactly reverses Job's position, who admits that he has sinned, but complains that the punishment is out of all proportion with his offence. This is a more offensive statement than has yet been made, and is highly characteristic of the speaker.

7. Our version expresses the general sense but not the special force of the original, **Canst thou attain to God's insight**, *i.e.* be like Him, able to search into all secret things. The next clause means, **or attain to the perfection of the Almighty**, *i.e.* so as to comprehend Him and His ways. The Hebrew has the same word for "attain," or "find" in both clauses.

8. *It is as high as heaven*] Lit. "heights of heaven; what doest thou? deeper than hell, what knowest thou?" *i.e.* The wisdom of God is as the heights of heaven, how canst thou reach it? deeper than Sheol, how canst thou comprehend it?

10. *If he cut off*, &c.] Or, **If He pass on, and imprison, and call to judgment, who shall prevent Him?** Each clause has a direct reference to Job's complaints, ix. 11—16. The avenger of guilt passes, or rushes, on the criminal, arrests him and keeps him in custody, until the court is summoned to judge him. (Dillm., Merx.) Zophar thus accepts the facts stated by Job, but refers them to the wisdom and justice of the Almighty.

11. *will he not then consider it*] The exact meaning is "and He doth not consider it," *i.e.* He needs no lengthened observation, He seeth at once into the ground of the heart, His wisdom is direct intuition, absolute and perfect. Another rendering is preferred by some commentators, "and man doth not perceive it," *i.e.* it is unknown and unsuspected by man.

12. **And a vain man is made wise** (lit. hearted), **and the colt of a wild ass is born a man;**" a difficult passage, which has been explained variously; our A.V. gives a good sense, and is defensible; but it seems on the whole more probable that Zophar describes the effect of the Divine visitation, and asserts that by it a vain man acquires a new heart and learns wisdom; and a character wild, stubborn, and untameable (like the wild ass of the desert (see vi. 5, and xxxix. 5—8), such as Job might appear to Zophar) is born again, so to speak, and humanized. Thus Dillmann, whose exegesis of the passage is, on the whole, the most satisfactory. The LXX. appear to have had a different reading, "and as a wild ass is man born of woman," which Merx, as usual, adopts, rendering ילבב, "devoid of understanding." See Note below.

13. *prepare thine heart*] This refers to the previous verse; man gets a heart, *i.e.* right understanding from God, but not without his own concurrent act: "prepare" or "direct," "set it right." Cf. Ps. lxxviii. 8.

14 If iniquity *be* in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

15 For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:

16 Because thou shalt forget *thy* misery, *and* remember *it* as waters *that* pass away:

17 And *thine* age † shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

† Heb. *shall arise above the noonday.*

18 And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig *about thee*, *and* thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

19 [a] Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make *thee* afraid; yea, many shall † make suit unto thee.

20 But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and † they shall not escape, and [b] their hope *shall be as* ‖ the giving up of the ghost.

[a] Lev. 26. 6.
† Heb. *intreat thy face.*
† Heb. *flight shall perish from them.*
[b] chap. 8. 14. & 18. 14.
‖ Or, *a puff of breath.*

15. *without spot*] Without any stain of guilt; Zophar refers to ix. 30, and other passages of similar import.

stedfast] Literally "molten," *i.e.* like a molten statue, firm and solid, after passing through the furnace of affliction; there is probably a reference to vi. 12, and to the melting away, dissolution, of the diseased frame. Merx follows the LXX. and reads מזק fined, purified.

17. *shall be clearer*] Or, shall "rise up," like the sun out of darkness, "shining more and more unto the perfect day," only here the image is somewhat different, a sudden and complete transition from darkness to noonday light. Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 6; Isai. lviii. 10.

The next clause, "thou shalt shine forth," presents some difficulty; the probable rendering of the original is "the darkness shall be as the morning light," or "should it be dark, *yet*, shall it be *bright* as morn," meaning that any darkness which should come upon Job would be as the morning light, any troubles or afflictions of his latter years will be full of mercy and comforts.

There may be a studied allusion to the last words of Job's discourse; as the light of the land of death is darkness, so the darkness of the just is light.

18. *thou shalt dig*] The word rendered "dig" has in this book the meaning "search," "look around," *e.g.* xxxix. 29: where our A.V. has "seeketh." This gives a more intelligible sense, **thou shalt look around and rest securely**, finding no cause for alarm.

20. *fail*] **Waste away**, be consumed, straining and looking out in every direction with vain expectations of help.

their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost] Lit. a breathing out of the soul, or expiring; an allusion to Job's repeated expressions of longing for death as his only hope; see viii. 14; and compare Prov. xi. 7.

The effect of this discourse could only be to exasperate Job; it states in the most distinct and offensive form what the other two had suggested or insinuated, and far from admitting the possibility of Job's purity and uprightness, asserts that his guilt has not yet been fully punished. His hands are supposed to be full of iniquity, his tent of ill-gotten spoils, his face spotted with ignominy. See *v.* 15. The hope which it seems to suggest is nugatory, since it could only be realized after a change which implies previous guilt of the deepest dye, of which Job's conscience acquitted him.

NOTE on CHAP. XI. 12.

The LXX. render the verse, *ἄνθρωπος δ' ἄλλως νήχεται λόγοις, βροτὸς δὲ γεννητὸς γυναικὸς ἴσα ὄνῳ ἐρημίτῃ*: which Merx adopts, so far as the second clause is concerned, and renders, ופרא יער אדם ילוד אשה. This is less objectionable than many of his emendations. In the first clause ילבב may certainly mean deprived of heart, as in Sol. Song iv. 9, marg., taken away my heart: and אשה might fall out before אם in the next verse: the old form of the letters ם and ש is nearly identical: but the Masoretic text, as explained above, is forcible and suits the context.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Job maintaineth himself against his friends that reprove him.* 7 *He acknowledgeth the general doctrine of God's omnipotency.*

AND Job answered and said,

2 No doubt but ye *are* the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

3 But I have † understanding as

† Heb. *an heart*

CHAP. XII. In this and the two following chapters Job sums up the result of the first day's colloquy. xii. 1—6 contains a bitter reproof of the speakers' arrogance and pitilessness, with a reassertion of the statement that the good suffer and the wicked prosper.

well as you; †I *am* not inferior to you: yea, †who knoweth not such things as these?

† Heb. *I fall not lower than you.*
† Heb. *with whom* are *not such as these?*

4 I am *as* one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright *man is* laughed to scorn.

5 He that is ready to slip with *his* feet *is as* a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.

7—25. All results whether good or evil must be attributed to God, Whose hand hath wrought it all, and upon Whom all things living absolutely depend. In this passage Job admits what has been said of the unsearchableness and omnipotence of God, but draws from it the inference that He causes all the evils which are found in the world. In the next place, xiii. 1—12, Job charges his friends with falsehood, and with a base and cowardly attempt to vindicate a course of things which is manifestly inconsistent with the attributes of righteousness. In all this it is evident that Job argues simply from the facts as they come before him; having no clue to the secret of the visitation by which he is reduced to such misery, he sees in it but an absolutely inscrutable dispensation, and rejects all attempts to account for it by facts within the scope of human experience, as vain and foolish. He knows that the supposition that he is himself inwardly false, godless and hypocritical is quite groundless; he does not believe that his friends really think that goodness and prosperity are inseparable; he scorns the mean spirit which can profess to be satisfied with a fallacy, and he threatens them with God's wrath for such mockery. The following passage (13—19) is in another tone; Job declares that although he can neither comprehend the visitation nor hope for deliverance, still his trust is unshaken, "though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," he will neither give up trust in God, nor his own integrity: he then (20—28) pleads directly with God, asks for light only, only to know why he is thus condemned, what is the special sin; and from the frailty and misery of man he draws a plea for pity and respite, xiv. (1—12), since life once lost is irrecoverable, till the heavens be no more there will be no awakening from that sleep. (13—28.) In this passage comes the first gleam of a hope, a dim uncertain feeling which was afterwards to be developed. Job expresses a desire that he may lie in the grave until the time of wrath be past away; he would then wait patiently for his change, with a certainty that God would have a desire to the work of His own hands. As for any other hope he rejects it altogether, all that is in the world must perish, man passeth away from it, and for ever, what may be the lot of his posterity he cannot know, all that is sure for himself in this life is pain and misery. The whole argument may thus be summed up in a few points. The correlation between goodness and prosperity assumed by his friends does not rest on facts; whatever evils exist in the universe come from God's work; all attempts to frame a theodicea for this life are false and sophistical; all that a good man can do is to retain trust in God though without hope of living to see the cause of right triumph; the sense of inner weakness, past and present sinfulness, will find expression in prayer, but a consideration of the shortness of life, its wretchedness, its hopeless end, brings out an aspiration, developed by spiritual affliction into a hope of a restoration to life, and of a last judgment, which must issue in the perfect establishment of the right.

2. *the people*] The true representatives of mankind, the only people deserving the name.

3. *understanding*] Rather, **a heart**; as in the margin. Job refers to Zophar's words, xi. 12, where see note.

I am not inferior to you] This expresses the sense better than the marginal rendering, but the exact meaning of the phrase is, I do not fall, or am not overthrown by you, as a wrestler by a stronger antagonist. In the next chapter, *v.* 2, he winds up his contest in the same words.

4, 5. These two verses present several difficulties (see Note below); they may be on the whole more correctly rendered as follows:

4. A scorn to my neighbour must I be?
   A man who calleth on God, and He heareth him!
   A scorn, I, the just, the upright!
5. **Contempt** for woe is the feeling of one at ease;
   It awaits them whose feet stumble.

In the first words Job alludes more especially to xi. 2, 3, 11, 12, and 20, but there is an undercurrent of bitter mockery of Zophar throughout the speech. The word "lamp" in our Authorized Version was formerly adopted by most scholars, and gives a fair sense if we understand a lamp, or rather torch, burnt out and extinguished, at once useless and offensive; but the translation above given is preferable. The word rendered woe occurs thrice in this book, and once in Prov. xxiv. 22. **It awaits**, *i.e.* the man who revels in the feeling of his own security is ever ready to mock one who slips, *i.e.* falls like Job into misfortune.

6 The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth *abundantly*.

7 But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:

8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

9 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?

10 In whose hand *is* the [1] soul of every living thing, and the breath of [†] all mankind.

11 [a] Doth not the ear try words? and the [†] mouth taste his meat?

12 With the ancient *is* wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

13 [1] With him *is* wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he [b] shutteth [†] up a man, and there can be no opening.

15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

16 With him *is* strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver *are* his.

17 He leadeth counsellers away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.

[1] Or, *life*.
[†] Heb. *all flesh of man*.
[a] ch. 34. 3.
[†] Heb. *palate*.
[1] That is, *With God*.
[b] Is. 22. 22. Rev. 3. 7.
[†] Heb. *upon*.

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6. *into whose hand God bringeth abundantly*] Lit. **who bringeth God in his hand**; *i.e.* who has no god but his own hand, or weapon; thus Habakkuk i. 16, and, as understood by most commentators, *v.* 11 also. Virgil has precisely the same expression, Dextra mihi Deus. 'Æn.' x. 773. For the preceding clause, cf. xxi. 7.

7. *But ask now*] Job begins his own grand statement of the absolute power and majesty of God with the assertion that all His creatures bear witness to a truth, which his friends would seem to flatter themselves was their exclusive possession.

9. *in all these*] Or, **by all these**, *i.e.* by reflecting on all these things—Job does not attribute the knowledge of which he speaks to the creatures themselves, but to man who learns what they unconsciously teach. They are a book, so to speak, in which the Creator has written the lesson which a wise heart may understand. "The LORD:" it is remarkable that the name "Jehovah" occurs here, and here only in the discourses of Job and his neighbours. It is as though reflection on the greatness of God brought out the very innermost conviction of the Patriarch's heart, and forced from him the word which expresses the very essence of the Deity. There may also be a reference to his own words when he was told of his children's death, i. 21, "Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken them away." He hath done all this. The Moabitish stone lately discovered proves that the name Jehovah was known to aliens from Israel at the time when most modern critics hold that the Book of Job was written. It was probably known, though seldom used, at a much earlier age.

10. In this statement Job shews at once his unshakeable conviction of God's sovereignty, in Whom all His creatures "live and move and have their being," and his perplexity at the apparent results. Cf. Dan. v. 23; Acts xvii. 28.

11—13. The connection of thought is this; man acquires knowledge by the senses, the hearing ear, the palate that tastes (an ordinary biblical word for discernment, see also vi. 30), and he attains to wisdom by long experience, only in old age, whereas wisdom, strength, counsel and understanding, *i.e.* wisdom and power in every form, in their absolute perfection, belong to God essentially, are *with Him* inherently and inseparably, not as a result of experience and reflection, but as His own from eternity.

14, 15. From the absolute wisdom and power of God, it follows that all physical evil must proceed from Him.

14. *he shutteth up*] xi. 10.

15. *he withholdeth*] See Deut. xi. 17, where the Hebrew has the same word.

16. Not only physical but moral evil *must* take place by His permission or will; whether men deceive or are deceived they are in God's hands, the puppets of His will. Job touches here with a bold hand the very deepest problem of existence: and rash as his words are, they prove at once the depth of his convictions, and the honesty of his heart; whatever the conclusion may be, he will not give up one truth which he receives. His mind, while bewildered by his calamities (see chap. vi. 3), and maddened by the scorn of his easy-going friends, can now see only the dark side; in seasons of calm and devout reflection he will admit that all evils are made to subserve the purposes of God. That

18 He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

19 He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

20 [e] He removeth away † the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

21 He poureth contempt upon princes, and ‖ weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

22 He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

23 He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and † straiteneth them *again*.

24 He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness *where there is* no way.

25 They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to † stagger like *a* drunken *man*.

e ch. 32. 9.
† Heb. *the lip of the faithful.*
‖ Or, *looseth the girdle of the strong.*
† Heb. *leadeth in.*
† Heb. *wander.*

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *Job reproveth his friends of partiality.* 14 *He professeth his confidence in God:* 20 *and intreateth to know his own sins, and God's purpose in afflicting him.*

LO, mine eye hath seen all *this*, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

2 What ye know, *the same* do I know also: I *am* not inferior unto you.

3 Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.

4 But ye *are* forgers of lies, ye *are* all physicians of no value.

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they "work together for good to them that love God," is a truth realized fully by those only who have learned it from Christ.

17. *spoiled*] or "captive;" lit. divested of clothing, or barefooted: compare Isai. xx. 2, 4 with Mic. i. 8, where A.V. has "stript."

fools] See ix. 24. Here the meaning seems to be that God overthrows a nation, and by the ruin, which falls on the leaders and judges, convicts them of folly.

18. The Vulgate renders this verse "He looseth the belt of kings, and bindeth their loins with a cord:" a forcible antithesis, adopted by Renan and Merx: but the Hebrew in the first clause is more correctly translated "bond," in the second "girdle" is also correct if taken in the sense of a fetter: the general meaning is thus, God sets kings free, or brings them into captivity. Some commentators take "bond" in the sense of authority, which would give a good sense, were it justified by usage.

19. *princes*] The original has **priests**. The word is elsewhere rendered "princes" in our version, but without sufficient authority. It is not to be inferred that priests formed a caste in Job's time, but the chieftain of each tribe, and the head of a great family was, like Melchizedek, at once prince and priest. See note on Exod. ii. 16. The following clause shews that the heads of ancient families are denoted; Ps. cvii. 40 substitutes "princes."

20. *trusty*] *i.e.* those who are trusted, or perhaps confident, because they have the gift of eloquence.

21. *and weakeneth the strength*] The marginal rendering is correct; **He looseth the girdle of the strong.**

23. Our translation probably gives the true meaning; but the last words may be rendered "He leads them into captivity." See Note below.

24, 25. Job refers to the speech of Eliphaz: accepting all the premisses, which he enlarges and illustrates with a marvellous variety of imagery, he simply repudiates the conclusion, that every man in calamity may be assured that it is a special punishment, and will be reversed upon his amendment.

24. *wilderness*] The Hebrew "Tohu," a desolate waste," is very forcible, it is used in Gen. i. 2. See note on vi. 18; and Ps. cvii. 40.

25. Cf. v. 14; and Ps. cvii. 27.

NOTES on CHAP. XII. 4, 5, and 23.

4, 5. The first verse is omitted by the LXX. and Merx rejects it as a gloss; but the LXX. is here in a state of utter confusion. Jerome, Syr., and Targ. have it. In the next verse, בוז is the natural subject of both clauses. Merx renders the whole, "Dem Unglück Hohn. so wahnen Sichere, Hohn steht bei denen, deren Füsse wanken." The word נכון is used precisely the same way, ch. xv. 23: "is ready at his hand," A.V.

23. In the first clause LXX. πλανῶν, leads astray; Merx משׂגה: but the text is preferable.

5 O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom.

6 Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

7 Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?

8 Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?

9 Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye *so* mock him?

10 He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.

11 Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?

12 Your remembrances *are* like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.

13 †Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what *will*.

† Heb. *Be silent from me.*

14 Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?

15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will †maintain mine own ways before him.

† Heb. *prove*, or, *argue*.

16 He also *shall be* my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

17 Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.

18 Behold now, I have ordered *my* cause; I know that I shall be justified.

CHAP. XIII. There is no pause between this and the preceding chapter; in the first two verses Job winds up his argument with the words which he used in the beginning of his speech.

3. This desire to plead with God must be attributed to real inward faith: the plagues which had fallen on Job confound him: he cannot reconcile them, or other events in the world's history with what he believes of God, but they do not drive him from God; far from renouncing God, he turns away from all other things, comes to Him, and is quite sure that his honesty will be recognized and approved, see *v.* 18. Cf. xxxi. 35.

4. Other translations of this verse have been proposed, but our version is probably correct. Job brings two charges: his opponents had forged lies to vindicate God, and had failed in their duty to heal their friend's wounds: thus LXX., Rosen., Renan.

5. *wisdom*] The advice is not mere irony, it is more than a taunt, for true wisdom teaches in the first place the limits of our knowledge, and the duty of silence when we are really ignorant. Cf. Prov. xvii. 28.

8. *accept his person? will ye contend*] As special pleaders, a common expression in Scripture for undue regard to rank and power. He accuses his friends of defending a cause, which, whether right or wrong, they do not understand, simply because they fear God's power.

12. *remembrances*] *i.e.* the wise saws valued as memorials of the wisdom of past ages; this may refer more specially to Bildad's speech, chap. viii. 8: but see also iv. 8.

your bodies] Or, **your defences to defences of clay**, the arguments by which you attempt to defend your position are like earth-works hastily raised, and easily overthrown.

13. Lit. **Be silent from me that I may speak**, as marg.

14, 15. The meaning seems to be—Why should I take my flesh in my teeth? Shall I not take my life in my hand? In the first clause Job asks why he should cling to mere life, his torn and mutilated flesh, as with the desperate tenacity of a wild beast: in the latter, he resolves to risk his life (cf. 1 Sam. xix. 5, and the references there), to expose himself to any danger in pleading with God.

15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*] Or, **Lo, He may slay me, yet will I wait for Him.** This appears to be the true sense of the passage, see Note below. It expresses Job's own feeling, as is shewn distinctly by the next verse, "He shall be my salvation," about which no question is raised; it corresponds exactly with the expression in Psalm xxxviii. 15; a psalm throughout full of reminiscences of Job, and here apparently adopting his very words; the connection of thought is unbroken, whereas the rendering adopted by many commentators introduces an ill-timed exclamation of hopelessness. Compare Prov. xiv. 32.

16. *my salvation*] This leaves no doubt as to the very innermost feeling of Job. He is sure of salvation, though he knows not how it may be possible, or in what form it may come. The attempts to explain this away are excessively forced.

18. *justified*] Or, **that I shall be proved righteous.** Job's confidence is in his consciousness of integrity, not merely in what is called forensic justification.

19 Who *is* he *that* will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

20 Only do not two *things* unto me: then will I not hide myself from thee.

21 Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid.

22 Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.

23 How many *are* mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.

24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?

25 Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

26 For thou writest bitter things against me, and [a] makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

27 Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and † lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the † heels of my feet.

28 And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth eaten.

[a] Psal. 25. 7.
† Heb. *observest.*
† Heb. *roots.*

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19. *for now*, &c.] Or, "for now (in that case) I shall be silent and die." The meaning is, that he is assured God will not maintain the cause against him, will not assert that he really drew upon himself all these calamities; but that if he be mistaken in that conviction, if God really should impute guilt to him, he has no alternative but to lie down and die in silence. There is a strong undercurrent of hope in this, for it is clear that Job is confident that when God speaks it will be in righteousness and love, see xiv. 15.

22. *call thou*] *i.e.* as the accuser; the expression is technical and forensic. Cf. xiv. 15.

23. *How many*] The question implies that Job admits iniquities and sins, but denies that they are numerous or unpardonable.

24. *Wherefore hidest thou*] Job realizes the judicial conflict, he feels himself in the immediate presence of God, but still with a veil, so to speak, interposed between him and his accuser.

for thine enemy] An indirect, but most touching assertion of his love and trust; Job feels that the enmity can but be apparent, though every outward act seems to attest its reality.

25. *break*] The original word implies great violence, contrasted with the utter helplessness of the object against which it is directed.

dry stubble] This is a better rendering than chaff, proposed by some commentators, but both words convey the same thought, a storm driving an object so light and unsubstantial that a breath would suffice to drive it away. The very tenderness and melancholy of the appeal proves how deeply the sense of a goodness irreconcileable with such appearance of cruelty was seated in Job's heart: no such appeal to a relentless or malignant power is conceivable.

26. *thou writest*] This refers to judicial proceedings, in which the accusation was produced in writing, see note on xxxi. 35; and compare Isa. x. 1. This was customary in Egypt long before the time of Job, and probably in all countries where writing was known, as was certainly the case with the Hittites in the time of Rameses II.; see the treaty between him and their prince Chetasar; Chabas, 'Voyage d'un Egyptien,' p. 332. Their scribe had engraved the treaty on a tablet of silver. M. Chabas has an observation further on, p. 345, of great importance in its bearing upon the use of writing in very early times. "Le traité avait été écrit par les Khétas sur une tablette d'argent dont le texte égyptien nous donne la figure. C'est un carré long surmonté d'un anneau qui servait à le suspendre. M. Renan a rencontré dans le Haut-Liban des monuments où se distinguent encore les points d'attache des plaques de métal sur les quelles on écrivait les enseignements sacrés. Nul doute que tous les actes destinés à être portés à la connaissance du public ne fussent exposés de la même manière, sur des stèles mobiles de bois ou de métal, au lieu d'être, comme en Egypte, gravés sur les monuments. C'est ce qui explique l'extrême rareté des inscriptions antiques dans la Syrie et la Phénicie."

the iniquities of my youth] An important passage, proving that Job's consciousness of integrity does not exclude a true estimate of his own character: like the psalmist he remembers the sins of his youth, and attributes his sufferings to them, but not without a feeling that it is inconsistent with God's goodness to visit them so bitterly. The words, however, express a general truth; the sense of sin remains, it haunts the memory, and comes out with terrible vividness in seasons of trial and suffering. Cf. Ps. xxv. 7.

27. *in the stocks*] As a criminal already condemned, who, when released for a season,

is still watched with unceasing vigilance, and not permitted to go one step beyond the narrow bounds prescribed to him. The word rendered stocks occurs only here and xxxiii. 11; but the meaning is not questioned. Cf. Jer. xxix. 26, Acts xvi. 24. It is a punishment still used among the Bedouins, but only in the case of condemned criminals. The last words are rather obscure, they may probably be rendered, Thou markest a line for the soles of my feet; that is, drawest a line beyond which I must not move one step. This is no exaggerated description of the leprosy-smitten sufferer, lying on his heap of ashes, who, as the next words say, wastes away like very rottenness, like a garment consumed by moths. Cf. Ps. xxxix. 11, Isa. l. 9.

NOTE on CHAP. XIII. 15.

The rendering of this verse, apart from dogmatic considerations, depends on the reading and meaning of one word, and on the right construction of another, לֹא אֲיַחֵל, Cethib, but the Keri has לוֹ. Thus also eight MSS., Kennicott, and nineteen others, De Rossi. The latter, if correct, would leave no doubt; but if לא be the true reading, the sense *no* would have a *primâ facie* advantage; not however a decisive superiority, since it is admitted that in some of the eighteen passages, in which the Cethib and the Keri have the same variation, the form לא is archaic, and equivalent to לוֹ. The authority of the Old Versions is in favour of the sense "to him," and probably of the reading לוֹ. The LXX. ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ; Aq. ἀναμενῶ αὐτόν, or σχολάσω αὐτῷ. (see Syr. Hex. ap. Field, 'Hexapla' in loc.). The Peshito has "I will hope in Him alone;" thus, too, the Arab., which, however, is not an independent witness, being taken from the Syr. The Vulg. has "in ipso sperabo;" the Targ. "I will pray before Him." The Talmud touches the question in two places, in the Mishna, 'Sota,' ch. v. § 5, p. 250, Suren.; it leaves the reading, or rendering, uncertain. In the Gemara, ib. 31, it observes that the לא may be taken as equivalent to לוֹ, as in Isa. lxiii. 9. So far as this word is concerned, there may be a greater weight of authority in favour of the reading לא; but there is a decided preponderance in favour of the meaning "to him."

This is confirmed by the usage of the word יחל. It occurs no less than 19 times in the Psalms, and 8 times in this book. It means to wait for, with the connected notion of hopefulness, and it is regularly constructed with its object by the preposition ל. In two passages it stands without an object expressed, but with distinct reference to waiting, and enduring, vi. 11, and xiv. 14. Nothing can well be more awkward, or out of place, than the rendering adopted by many modern critics, "Lo, He will slay me, I do not hope." It is directly opposed to the statement in the very next clause, and to the certainty which Job never loses, that his integrity will be recognized at last. On the whole the rendering of our A. V. should be retained, or with a very slight change of expression to bring it nearer to the letter of the original, the clause may be translated, as above, "Lo, He may slay me, I will wait for Him," *i.e.* "abide hopefully the issue of His judgment."

In translating this verse Merx abandons his own canon (p. lxxiii.) viz. that the combined authority of the LXX. and Syr. is conclusive against the received text where it differs from them. The LXX. certainly read לוֹ, which they render ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ. It is uncertain what they had before them for איחל (probably אוכיח) which they render doubtingly, ἦ μὴν λαλήσω καὶ ἐλέγξω. The Coptic, a good witness (as Merx holds, p. 71) to the true reading of the LXX, has "shall I not speak and plead before Him?"

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Job intreateth God for favour, by the shortness of life, and certainty of death.* 7 *Though life once lost be irrecoverable, yet he waiteth for his change.* 16 *By sin the creature is subject to corruption.*

MAN *that is* born of a woman *is* † of few days, and full of trouble.

2 [a] He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

† Heb. *short of days.*

[a] chap. 8. 9. Psal. 102. 11. & 103. 15. & 144. 4.

CHAP. XIV. 1—12. The tone of plaintive expostulation, when Job pleads directly with his Maker, begins with the 20th verse of the preceding chapter, and is still more strongly marked in these verses, which indicate an inward process, a gradual subsidence of stormy passion, preparatory to a state of mind, in which the true secret of God's dispensations may be dimly discerned, a gleam of hope may visit the soul. The images, by which the shortness and misery of life and its utter hopelessness, if followed by no resurrection, are illustrated, have been adopted in all ages of the church as the truest and most touching expression of the feelings of mourners.

1. *born of a woman*] The Hebrew attri-

3 And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?

4 †Who *b*can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.

† Heb. *Who will give.*
b Ps. 51. 5.
c chap. 7. 1.

5 *c*Seeing his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

6 Turn from him, that he may †rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.

† Heb. *cease.*

7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

9 *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and †wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where *is* he?

† Heb. *is weakened, or, cut off.*

11 *As* the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that

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butes the weakness and moral infirmity of man to his birth of woman, conceived by her in sin (Ps. li.), a child of her sorrow and pain (Gen. iii. 16), and sharing her uncleanness, which, under the law, needed a special expiation; and that view, though, doubtless, brought out with peculiar distinctness by the provisions of the Levitical ritual, must have been prevalent among all who retained a knowledge of the primeval history of our race. It is one of the deepest and most widely spread convictions of man, especially among the descendants of Abraham.

of few days] Lit. as marg. "short of days." Prov. xiv. 17, Heb.

full] Lit. satiated, full to satiety of unrest: v. 7.

4. *out of an unclean*] The fact of original sin (not without what seems an allusion to its source) is thus distinctly recognized.

5, 6. The two verses are closely connected; there should be no full stop, as in common editions of the A.V., at the end of *v.* 5. Since his days are determined, the number of his months with Thee, since Thou hast fixed his limit which he cannot pass, therefore look away from him that he may cease, till he gladly finish his day like a hireling.

6. *Turn from him*] Or, Look away from him, turn Thy look from him: the look of God gives life, when that is withdrawn comes death. Cf. Ps. xxxix. 13.

rest] "Cease" is more accurate, but the idea of rest is involved in it.

accomplish] Or, **enjoy**, the word expresses the feeling of satisfaction with which the worn-out labourer comes to the end of his day's work.

7. *tender branch*] Or, **sucker**, a word which exactly corresponds to the original. Job alludes to two ways in which the tree, though cut down, continues its life, by sprouts springing out of the trunk, and by suckers growing out of the root. There may be a special reference to the palm-tree of which Shaw the Eastern traveller says, "when the old trunk dies there is never wanting one of these offsprings to succeed it." Compare Isa. xi. 1.

will not cease] The same word as in *v.* 6. The tree has a better lot than that which Job longs for in his misery.

9. *scent*] Lit. "breath," *i.e.* exhalation.

10. *wasteth away*] Perishes without retaining any vitality.

12. *till the heavens be no more*] It is remarkable that an expression, which as yet in the mind of Job was apparently equivalent to a denial of the possibility of restoration to life, coincides with the declarations of the New Testament, which make the resurrection simultaneous with the breaking up of the visible universe. In this we may see an instance of overruling inspiration, and at the same time a preparation of Job's spirit for a hope, which, though vague and dim, anticipated the revelation of God's purposes in Christ.

13—15. On the interpretation of this passage depends to a great extent a right insight into the scope and object of the book. Job expresses a desire that the grave may not be his everlasting home, that he may remain there till the wrath be past, that God may appoint a set time, and remember him; he is content to wait for that time, if he may then be called to plead his cause; as he proceeds he finds a real ground for such a hope in God's love of the creation, His desire to the work of His own hands. This may be but a yearning, an inspiration, but it indicates the existence and strength of a feeling which

thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, shall he live *again?* all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

16 [d]For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?

[d] Psal. 139. 2.

17 My transgression *is* sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

18 And surely the mountain falling †cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

† Heb. *fadeth.*

19 The waters wear the stones: thou †washest away the things which grow *out* of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.

† Heb. *overflowest.*

20 Thou prevailest for ever against

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when developed would necessarily issue in the belief of a future compensation.

13. *hide me*] Cf. Ps. xxvii. 5. The word implies care as of a treasure.

grave] Sheol, the region of the shadow of death, described ch. x. 21, 22. That would be a real place of rest and refuge which he would enter gladly if there were a hope of restoration. x. 18. Among other names of the realm of the departed, the Egyptians called it hebs bekaau, the covering of the weary, the place where the weary are kept in peace. See Brugsch, 'Dict. Hier.' p. 437.

14. *shall he live again*] The question implies, not a denial of the possibility of such a restoration, but a deep sense of its hopelessness. The longing, however, bears witness to a spiritual instinct, which could scarcely exist without some corresponding reality. The latter clause means, were such a hope vouchsafed I would pass all the days of my service (the same word as in ch. vii. 1) in patient waiting until my change came. Cf. xiii. 15. The days of service in this case include the intermediate period in Sheol, when he would wait, like a soldier on guard, to be relieved; and the change is not from life to death, but from that state to new life. This interpretation, which is adopted by Dillmann, is literal and alone suits the context. The same word for change is rendered "will sprout again" in *v.* 7: a strong confirmation of the meaning here assigned to it.

15. *Thou shalt call*] An anticipation of our Lord's own word, John v. 28.

thou wilt have a desire] The hope of a resurrection is thus, for the first time, made to rest upon the love of God; the desire of the creature may suggest the possibility or reasonableness of such a hope, the desire of God alone can seal it. Job knew how his heart yearned to meet God, he believes that in God's heart there must be a corresponding yearning to see once more the creation of His power and love. This word touches upon the utmost limit of religious speculation; with that conviction Job was safe, the next application of it to his own circumstances would bring the truth out in a still more definite form, and make him know God as his Redeemer. The end of the first colloquy thus prepares us for the central point of the whole book, ch. xix. 23—27.

16—22. The hope which has been thus suggested, is contrasted with the utter emptiness and desolation of Job's actual condition.

16. The head and source of all Job's misery is the feeling that God for some unknown reason does not pardon. He numbers every false step, keeps a watch over his sins. The construction of the latter clause is questioned, Thou wilt not watch over my sin, or, as in the A. V. with an interrogation, Dost thou not watch over my sin? but the translation is probably correct. Dillmann follows Ewald, who would alter two letters (עבר for שמר), and render the clause, wilt Thou not pass over (and forgive) my sin?

17. The meaning of this obscure expression seems to be that God treasures up all Job's misdoings, keeps them carefully in order to repay them fully. He has but to open that bag and the sins will come out in the form of terrible plagues. Here again the admission of sin must be noted.

thou sewest up mine iniquity] Thus Ew. and Dill.; the iniquity, a stronger word even than transgression, is, as it were, sewed up, carefully kept in the bag. Both clauses are rendered in the very opposite sense by Merx, as expressing a hope that God would hide Job's sins: but the interpretation here given is sound.

18. *And surely the mountain falling*] Job alludes to a phenomenon common in volcanic districts, such as the Hauran, when a mountain undermined by subterraneous fire, falls in and crumbles away; a livelier emblem could scarcely be found of apparent stability, unsound foundation, sudden overthrow, and final dissolution.

cometh to nought] Or, **decays**.

out of his place] *i.e.* by earthquakes, to which allusions are scattered throughout this book. Cf. xviii. 4.

19. *thou washest...earth*] Or, **its overflowings** (sc. of the flood) **wash away the**

him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

21 His sons come to honour, and he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them.

22 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

CHAPTER XV.

1 *Eliphaz reproveth Job of impiety in justifying himself.* 17 *He proveth by tradition the unquietness of wicked men.*

THEN answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,

2 Should a wise man utter †vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?

† Heb. *knowledge of wind.*

3 Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?

4 Yea, †thou castest off fear, and restrainest ‖prayer before God.

† Heb. *thou makest void.*
‖ Or, *speech.*

5 For thy mouth †uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.

† Heb. *teacheth.*

6 Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee.

7 *Art* thou the first man *that* was

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dust of the earth: or the soil, leaving a barren waste.

20. *prevailest for ever against him*] Or, overpowerest him so that he will never recover. Cf. xv. 24.

changest] *i.e.* in the death struggle and in the rapid process of decay. A different word is used in *vv.* 7 and 14.

21. *His sons*] This refers to the hope suggested by Eliphaz that Job's posterity may still be great and prosperous, see ch. v. 25.

22. The meaning of this verse appears to be, one thing only is sure, his flesh on him (while life remains) will suffer, and his soul will mourn over him. (Cf. Ps. xlii. 9.) Dillmann supposes that it refers to the state after death, as though the body had imperfect consciousness of its dissolution, and the soul mourned over it in Sheol. He refers to Isa. lxvi. 24, where the carcases of the wicked are represented as tortured by the undying worm and unquenchable fire; but Job would scarcely anticipate future torment for himself, nor is the state of the just in Sheol ever represented as one of suffering. The point which Job sought to prove was simply that the future condition of a man's children had no bearing on his actual wretchedness.

CHAP. XV. The second colloquy between Job and his friends begins with this chapter and continues to the end of ch. xxi. The speech of Eliphaz differs much in tone from his first address, it is harsh and sarcastic, and assumes Job's guilt as proven by his own lips. 1—6. He reproves his presumption in despising the wisdom of his elders, disregarding the consolations of God and arraigning His judgments, forgetful of man's utter corruption and his own abomination. 7—16. Then under cover of quoting axioms of wise antiquity he describes the actual condition, feelings, and struggles of Job, in which he sees a proof of his wickedness, and a token of his final destruction. The discourse has not a word of comfort, nor the suggestion of a hope. It marks a considerable change in the spirit of the speaker, and brings the question much nearer to an issue. He does not indeed accuse Job of *renouncing* God, but of rebelling against him, *vv.* 4, 13, 25, 26, and denounces his attempts to vindicate himself, and hold fast his integrity, as vain, impious and hypocritical.

2. *vain knowledge*] Literally as in the margin, "knowledge of wind," empty, noisy, and turbulent; the turn of expression is highly sarcastic, it has what may be called a grim humour, the words of Job are like wind, his whole inner man is inflated, torn and in a state of turmoil as though possessed by storm winds from the burning desert. See also vi. 26; viii. 2. The word "belly" is a necessary, because literal, translation of the original, which means in Hebrew physiology the innermost nature of man, the seat of thought, intelligence, and reflection, cf. Joh. vii. 38. In Arabic "beteniyeh" derived from the same root, means the inner mystic sense.

4. *restrainest prayer*] Or, **hinderest meditation**. The margin has "speech;" neither of these words exactly expresses the meaning, which is rather "devout meditation." Job is accused of using arguments which are irreconcileable with tranquil and devout meditation, the spirit of prayer in the presence of God. Thus Ges.; cf. Ps. cxix. 97.

5. *uttereth*] Or, "teacheth," *i.e.* proves, demonstrates; but the clause should rather be rendered **thine iniquity teacheth thy mouth**, sc. suggests the arguments which it utters. Thus Vulg., Rashi, Dill. The latter clause brings the serious accusation against Job, that he wilfully adopts the course of crafty or subtle men, who calumniate their fellow-men, and do not shrink from accusing

born? or wast thou made before the hills?

8 [a] Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?

[a] Rom. 11. 34.

9 What knowest thou, that we know not? *what* understandest thou, which *is* not in us?

10 With us *are* both the gray-headed and very aged men, much elder than thy father.

11 *Are* the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?

12 Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at,

13 That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest *such* words go out of thy mouth?

14 [b] What *is* man, that he should be clean? and *he which is* born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

15 [c] Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

[b] 1 Kings 8. 46. 2 Chron. 6. 36. ch. 14. 4. Psal. 14. 3. Prov. 20. 9. 1 John 1. 8. [c] ch. 4. 18.

16 How much more abominable and filthy *is* man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

17 I will shew thee, hear me; and that *which* I have seen I will declare;

18 Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid *it*:

19 Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.

God. The same word, "subtle," is used of the serpent, Gen. iii. 1.

7. *the first man*] Eliphaz probably alludes to the belief that Adam the first man was endowed with perfect wisdom by God. It is a proverbial saying in India, "he is the first man, no wonder that he is so wise."

8. *Hast thou heard*, &c.] Or, **wast thou** *present as* **a hearer in the counsel of Eloah?** The reference to passages, such as Gen. i. 26; iii. 22, is clear; compare also Jer. xxiii. 18; where the A.V. has "counsel," but in the marg. "secret." Cf. ch. xxix. 4, and Rom. xi. 34.

restrain] Literally "cut off and appropriate:" the same word as in *v.* 4, but with a slight modification of meaning. Merx follows LXX. "has wisdom reached thee?"

10. *With us*] Or, **Among us.** Eliphaz is supposed to refer to his own advanced age, or to that of his friends, who were probably Job's contemporaries. It seems more probable that he speaks of the ancient sages quoted by Bildad, and afterwards in this discourse by himself.

11. *the consolations of God*] *i.e.* the assurances, which he and the others had given in God's name, of deliverance, restoration and a happy and secure old age, on the condition of Job's confessing his guilt and putting it away. These Eliphaz calls "consolations," as they would have been, had Job accepted the premisses.

is there any secret thing with thee] Rather, **and the word spoken gently to thee?"** sc. arguments which were addressed to thee in a tender and gentle spirit, such as Eliphaz considers that his own should be regarded.

12. *wink at*] Or, **why do thine eyes roll?** The word occurs only in this passage, but a similar one in Arab. and Syr. means "wink," or "move" the eye. An angry indignant movement is here indicated.

13. *thy spirit*] The word is rendered indifferently "wind" or "spirit" and often, as here, includes the meaning, wrath or passion. This ambiguity gives a peculiar force to the rebuke. Eliphaz alludes to his own words, *v.* 2.

14—16. These general truths of man's inherent uncleanness and liability to punishment are laid down by Eliphaz in his first discourse (iv. 17, 18), and admitted by Job himself (xiv. 4). Cf. xxv. 4—6.

15. *his saints*] As in ch. v. 1, His holy angels. This view of defects inherent in the highest spiritual creatures is peculiar to the book of Job: see Introd. § 7.

16. How much more *shall* **one** *be condemned* **who is abominable and filthy, a man who drinks iniquity like water?** *i.e.* Job himself, cf. xxxiv. 7. Eliphaz thus adopts the strongest insinuations, even those of Zophar, and applies them openly to Job.

18. *and have not hid it*] The expression sounds rather weak, but Eliphaz implies that it must be his duty to speak out what others had taught him, regardless of offence.

19. The verse describes a state of things long passed away, when the patriarchs living in quiet possession of their own land, could preserve unbroken the traditions of the primeval world and their own purity of life. It is inferred that the writer lived in a time when "strangers," *i.e.* heathens, lived among his countrymen and exerted an evil influence upon their minds and characters, and therefore at a later period, in Hebrew history: but the re-

20 The wicked man travaileth with pain all *his* days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

21 †A dreadful sound *is* in his ears: in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.

† Heb. *A sound of fears.*

22 He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword.

23 He wandereth abroad for bread, *saying*, Where *is it?* he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.

24 Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.

25 For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.

26 He runneth upon him, *even* on *his* neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:

27 Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on *his* flanks.

28 And he dwelleth in desolate cities, *and* in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.

29 He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

30 He shall not depart out of darkness; the flame shall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.

31 Let not him that is deceived

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cords of ages long anterior to that assigned to Job himself are full of allusions to migrations, invasions, and disturbances, quite sufficient to account for this description, assuming it even to have been given by a contemporary; in fact, it might rather be inferred from this verse, that the writer lived at a time when the memory of an age of patriarchal simplicity was yet fresh in men's minds. The saying is singularly appropriate in the mouth of Eliphaz the Temanite, whose country offered little temptation to invaders, and was inhabited by a race famed throughout the east for wisdom shown especially in retention of ancient traditions: these points are urged with great force by Wetzstein, quoted by Delitzsch.

20. The latter clause means rather, **and a** *limited* **number of years is reserved for the oppressor.** Merx renders "the number of years which are counted to the oppressor," *i.e.* as long as he lives.

21. The following verses are full of direct allusions to Job's own complaints. Eliphaz takes each and all as symptoms of guilt, or proofs of iniquity.

22. *out of darkness*] He has no hope of returning from his hiding place, to which he betook himself when fleeing from the destroyer; he knows that the sword of the foe awaits him.

23. *for bread, saying, Where is it?*] The last words (Heb. *ayyeh*, with a slight difference in the vowel points, *ayyah*) may mean vulture, LXX. γυψίν. This gives a forcible meaning, adopted by Merx, "He wanders about to be the food of vultures."

day of darkness] The day of destruction.

24. *to the battle*] The Hebrew word is obscure, but probably means "onslaught," the fierce struggle in the field of battle, κλόνος ἀνδρῶν. Thus Fleischer ap. Delitzsch, and Merx.

26. *even on his neck*] Rather, "with his neck," resolutely, stubbornly, like a wild bull. In the second clause also the same preposition should be used, "with the thick bosses of his shields."

27—28. *Because*] The connection of thought is this. He shall not have an abiding prosperity, because he has lived in luxury, a godless carnal life, and dwelt in houses which he has acquired by violence, by the ruin of the lawful possessors, and therefore destined to destruction. For the expressions cf. Ps. xvii. 10, lxxiii. 7.

28. *houses*, &c.] Among the extensive possessions of Job were probably many buildings, or caverns, once inhabited by an extinct race, such as are now found in numbers throughout the Hauran. In these Eliphaz sees a proof of his oppressions, and an augury of his ruin.

29. The exact meaning of the last clause is uncertain, probably "their substance does not press the earth," *i.e.* is not like a well laden wagon in harvest time (thus Stick., Hahn, and Ew.): this translation preserves the substantial thought, and agrees very nearly with the rendering adopted by Rosen. and Ren., "ses possessions ne s'étendront plus sur la terre." Dillm. would alter the text. Merx follows LXX. "cast their shadow on the earth," sc. will not live in the light of day; see next clause.

30. *of his mouth*] By the blast of God; see iv. 9.

31. Or, **Let him not trust in vanity he is deceived.**

trust in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompence.

32 It shall be [1]accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green.

33 He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.

34 For the congregation of hypocrites *shall be* desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.

35 [d]They conceive mischief, and bring forth [1]vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

[1] Or, *cut off*.
[d] Ps. 7. 14. Is. 59. 4.
[1] Or, *iniquity*.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *Job reproveth his friends of unmercifulness.* 7 *He sheweth the pitifulness of his case.* 17 *He maintaineth his innocency.*

THEN Job answered and said,

2 I have heard many such things: [1][a]miserable comforters *are* ye all.

3 Shall [†]vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?

4 I also could speak as ye *do*: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you.

5 *But* I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should asswage *your grief*.

6 Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged: and *though* I forbear, [†]what am I eased?

7 But now he hath made me weary:

[1] Or, *troublesome*.
[a] chap. 13. 4.
[†] Heb. *words of wind*.
[†] Heb. *what goeth from me?*

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32. *It shall be accomplished*] The rendering in the text is preferable to that in the margin. The recompense due to his sin shall be fulfilled by a premature destruction.

33. *unripe grape*] The grape in its first stage is peculiarly tender and liable to disease; and the flowers of the olive are shaken off by the least gust of wind. "In spring, one may see the bloom on the slightest breath of wind shed like snow-flakes, and perishing by millions." Tristram, 'N. H. of Bible,' p. 375. Wetzstein, quoted by Delitzsch, observes that the olive flowers every year, but every second year the bloom falls off, and yields no berries.

34. *the congregation*] This may mean either the "household," or "the whole company;" apparently all a man's family, connections and associates; see chap. xvi. 7. Two charges are insinuated, hypocrisy with reference to Job's former reputation for piety, and bribery with reference to his character as a judge; both words imply secret and unsuspected guilt, discovered only by the punishment. Thus Eliphaz answers Job's protestations of innocence.

35. *vanity*] **Iniquity**, as in marg.

their belly] The same word, with the same meaning, which occurs in the first line of this discourse, "their very innermost nature." Dillm., however, understands this clause to mean their pregnant womb matures deceit, *i.e.* produces that which deceives and ruins themselves: so too Merx.

CHAP. XVI. Job's answer occupies two chapters. 1—5. He rejects the statements of Eliphaz as common-place, such as he might have himself used with equal ease had the positions of the speakers been reversed. 6—16. He draws out all the circumstances of his misery in order to justify the extremity of his anguish, and after an asseveration of innocence (*v.* 17), he appeals to earth and heaven, and to God Himself (*v.* 20). In chap. xvii. 1—10, he continues the appeal, and grounds it on the scorn, contumely (*v.* 2), ignorance (*v.* 4), and dishonesty (*v.* 5), of his friends. He then, 11—16, concludes with an expression of utter hopelessness so far as life is concerned; if there be hope it has no visible grounds, it has its only home in death.

2. *many such things*] Such wise saws as identify guilt with suffering. "Miserable comforters," or "comforters of trouble," who bring nothing but trouble. The same word is used here which in the last verse of the preceding chapter is rendered "mischief." Job thus retorts, the conception of mischief, or trouble, applies more directly to those whose duty it was to console the afflicted.

3. *vain words*] **Words of wind**, as in the margin. Job refers directly to the beginning of the speech of Eliphaz. "Emboldeneth," or **provoketh**, "exasperates." Why, Job asks, could you not comply with my request (xiii. 5—13), to be silent at least; what have I said to justify your irritation? LXX. παρενοχλήσει.

4. *in my soul's stead*] *i.e.* in the same state, like mine, wretched and desolate. *Heap up words*, the original phrase implies artificial combinations of words, as though it were all mere rhetorical declamation. LXX. ἐναλοῦμαι; Merx and Delagarde read אַרְחִיבָה; *i.e.* I would speak contemptuously to you, a probable, but not a necessary, emendation.

shake mine head] *i.e.* to express conviction of the sufferer's great and unpardonable sinfulness; cf. Ps. xxii. 7; Is. xxxvii. 22; Jer.

thou hast made desolate all my company.

8 And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, *which* is a witness *against me:* and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face.

9 He teareth *me* in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

10 They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me.

11 God †hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.

† Heb. *hath shut me up.*

12 I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken

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xviii. 16; Matt. xxvii. 39, where see references.

5. *strengthen*] Job may refer to Eliphaz's own account of his wise and tender dealings with sorrowers, see chap. iv. 3, 4: but the words "mouth" and "lips" probably imply that expressions of compassion are often mere outward shews, and do not come from the heart.

and the moving, &c.] The LXX. follows a different reading, "and I would not stay the moving of my lips:" would speak, like you, without reserve. Thus too the Syr. In the next verse for "asswaged" we might read **stayed.**

6. *Though I speak*] Words and silence are alike bootless in such a case as mine, *they* cannot asswage griefs, *this* brings no relief.

what am I eased] Lit. as in marg. what goeth from me? *sc.* will my pain thereby be diminished? Vulg. non recedet a me.

7—16. Job describes all the wretchedness which subjects him to the imputation of guilt. He thus shews that he is quite as fully convinced as others can be, that he labours under divinely appointed calamities; a point of great importance, which is kept before us throughout as the peculiar trial of the patriarch: the question is, whether he will forsake God, or give up his own integrity, when convinced that he stands alone, despised by man, an object of God's wrath, utterly hopeless and desolate.

7. *He hath made me weary*] God has afflicted me beyond all power of endurance, hence the justification of words wrung from a weary heart.

all my company] Refers to *v.* 34 of the preceding chapter, where the same word is used in the Hebrew. That which Eliphaz represents as the proper punishment of the hypocrite has befallen Job; "all that should accompany old age, as honour, reverence, and troops of friends," is taken away.

8. *hast filled me with wrinkles*] This rendering is defended by some critics, but the Hebrew more probably means **bound me fast** hand and foot, deprived me of all power of resisting or moving: cf. xiii. 27.

a witness] *i.e.* an indication and proof of guilt.

leanness] Literally "falsehood," sc. the affliction, which is falsely taken as a sign of secret guilt, a bold and striking figure. The rendering "leanness" is however defended by good scholars; cf. Ps. cix. 24, where the corresponding verb is rendered "faileth."

9. *He teareth*] Or, **His wrath teareth, and He hateth me**: *i.e.* He deals with me altogether as an enemy. Job is speaking of the outward demonstrations, not of the inward movements of God's feeling towards him; had he believed the enmity to be real and absolute, there could have been no pleading, no "pouring out tears unto God;" see *v.* 20. For the simile cf. ch. xviii. 4, note; Hos. vi. 1; Amos i. 11.

mine enemy] Among many words which Job might have taken he chooses that which expresses enmity snewn by outward acts, an "afflicter," not a "hater."

sharpeneth his eyes upon me] Looks on me with a fierce scrutinizing glance. A friend compares this with Dante's graphic lines, 'Inf.' xv. *vv.* 21, 22, E si ver noi aguzzavan le ciglia, &c.; but the simile here suggested is with a lance or sword. Sym. ὤξυναν τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. LXX. ἀκίσιν ὀφθαλμῶν ἐνήλατο.

10. Job now turns to the conduct of his persecutors, not merely the three friends, but all who derided his sufferings; cf. chap. xxx. 1—14.

gaped, &c.] Ps. xxii. 13; Isai. lvii. 4.

upon the cheek] Mic. iv. 14; in A.V. v. 1; Lam. iii. 30; compare especially John xviii. 22, xix. 3.

11. *God hath*, &c.] The contumely to which Job is exposed is thus attributed to God's will; the heaviest affliction of all was that he should be delivered up to men whose want of honesty, truthfulness, and love evinced their wickedness. Compare vi. 14, 15, 27, xii. 4, 5. This passage was before the Psalmist when he depicted the sufferings of Christ, Ps. xxii. 12, 13.

me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark.

13 His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.

14 He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a giant.

15 I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust.

16 My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids *is* the shadow of death;

17 Not for *any* injustice in mine hands: also my prayer *is* pure.

18 O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.

19 Also now, behold, my witness *is* in heaven, and my record *is* †on high.

20 My friends †scorn me: *but* mine eye poureth out *tears* unto God.

21 O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man *pleadeth* for his ‖neighbour!

† Heb. *in the high places.*
† Heb. *are my scorners.*
‖ Or, *friend.*

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12. *shaken*] Or **broken**, as A.V. Jer. xxiii. 29.

his mark] Cf. vii. 20. The expressions in this and the next verse are reproduced by Jeremiah, Lam. ii. 11, iii. 11; Jer. xxiii. 29.

15, 16. Job describes the effects of the affliction.

sewed sackcloth] Not merely put it on as an ordinary badge of mourning, but, so to speak, sewed it on. It clung to the diseased skin, could not be removed without tearing; see chap. xxx. 18.

my horn] As the badge of power and dignity; all that Job prided himself upon. Cf. Ps. lxxv. 10.

16. *foul*] Or "inflamed." The original word is unusually strong, it means the heat produced by fermentation; the inward working of passion.

shadow of death] The eyesight fails, and is overwhelmed with blackness, the precursor of death.

17. *Not for any injustice*] In the original exactly the same words are used which are applied to Christ by Isaiah, liii. 9: "because he had done no violence," or, "not that he had done any violence." In this passage the meaning is given more accurately. Job directly meets the two charges of injustice toward man, and hypocrisy toward God.

18. *cover not thou my blood*] In this sublime outcry, Job alludes to the old belief, that the blood of one unjustly slain remains on the earth. The earth cannot absorb it, it cries aloud for vengeance; see Isaiah xxvi. 21, Ezek. xxiv. 7, 8; and Gen. iv. 10. It is the strongest assertion of his innocence; he dies guiltless, his blood, like that of Abel, cries to God, that cry can have "no place," no rest until it is answered. Thus while in form appealing to earth, Job in fact appeals to God Himself.

19. *Also now*] Even now, in the very midst of my desolation, when I seem to be wholly without a supporter. In this verse Job prepares us for the great declaration, xix. 25. Up to this time he reaches, but does not go beyond, the expression of his certainty that his righteousness is known, his one desire is, that God will vindicate it; but he cannot rest there; the certainty and the desire combined cannot but issue in the sure hope of a future manifestation.

my witness] God Himself is Job's witness, he has no other, all his trust is in Him who afflicts him.

my record] The words used here, and in the first clause are nearly synonymous, but the former means one who delivers testimony, the latter, one who knows and will assert the truth.

20. *scorn me*] **My scorners are my friends**; they, who scorn me, are those who ought to befriend me; they have nothing but taunts and gibes to give me in place of comfort. Cf. note on xii. 5. The appeal to God proves how intimately Job is penetrated with the feeling of His real tenderness and love. "Poureth out tears," literally, **streams**; the eye melts away, so to speak, in a flood of tears.

21. The meaning of this verse, which is not rendered quite correctly in the A.V., is **O that He** (that is, God Himself) **would plead for a man** (*i.e.* for me) **with God**: Job appeals from God to God; as He is at once Accuser and Judge, so he prays that He would be also at once Advocate and Judge; see note on xvii. 3. Each aspiration becomes clearer, and draws nearer to the unrevealed truth; no "daysman," who is not, like the Judge Himself, all-knowing and Almighty, will suffice.

as a man pleadeth for his neighbour] Either, "and as a son of man for his fellow," or, as Dillm. prefers, **and for the son of man** (*i.e.* Job) **against his neighbour**; *i.e.* that God would plead Job's cause, first, before Himself as Judge, secondly, against Job's fellow-men. The designation which Job here applies to himself, *son of man*, is remarkable; he feels that he really represents the cause

22 When [†] a few years are come, then I shall go the way *whence* I shall not return.

† Heb. *years of number.*

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Job appealeth from men to God.* 6 *The unmerciful dealing of men with the afflicted may astonish, but not discourage the righteous.* 11 *His hope is not in life, but in death.*

MY [1] breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves *are ready* for me.

1 Or, *spirit is spent.*

2 *Are there* not mockers with me? and doth not mine eye [†] continue in their provocation?

† Heb. *lodge.*

3 Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who *is* he *that* will strike hands with me?

4 For thou hast hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt *them.*

5 He that speaketh flattery to *his* friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.

6 He hath made me also a byword of the people; and [1] aforetime I was as a tabret.

1 Or, *before* them.

7 Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all [1] my members *are* as a shadow.

1 Or, *my thoughts.*

8 Upright *men* shall be astonied at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite.

9 The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands [†] shall be stronger and stronger.

† Heb. *shall add strength.*

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of suffering humanity. We know of Whom in this he was a true type.

22. This verse is closely connected with the first two verses of the next chapter. The near approach of death, and the persecution which Job undergoes, are pleaded as grounds for a divine interposition.

a few years] Lit., "a number of years," *i.e.* easily counted, few at the utmost; cf. chap. xv. 20.

CHAP. XVII. **1.** *My breath is corrupt*] This is preferable to the marg. The fetid breath tells of inward decay and the near approach of dissolution; cf. xix. 17.

the graves are ready for me] The expression is more forcible when the word "ready" is omitted; the grave is already Job's, he feels that he belongs to it, and it to him.

2. *Are there not mockers with me*] Or, **is there not mockery with me?** *i.e.* am I not altogether an object of mockery to my friends, who profess to hold out a hope of recovery, and yet accuse me of unpardonable sin?

continue] Lit. "lodge;" *i.e.* is not their bitter provocation incessant?

3. The meaning of this verse is clear; it refers altogether to the usual proceedings in a court of justice; each party in a suit had to deposit a pledge, or to find surety; the surety accepted the responsibility by striking hands with the person whom he represented. See Prov. vi. 1. Job turns altogether from his friends; they are not to be depended upon. He calls upon God Himself to "lay down," sc. the caution-money, to be Himself surety with Himself as Judge, to accept the position of Job's advocate. The expression "with Thee" is striking, be my surety with Thyself, cf. xvi. 21; no other mediation or advocacy is possible.

4. The reason why Job's friends cannot and will not defend the just cause is their want of understanding.

exalt them] Sc. by giving a verdict which will justify their accusations.

5. *flattery*] The word means "booty," and the whole sentence signifies, **A man who gives up his friend to be despoiled,** instead of defending him and taking his part when he is in calamity, will undergo in his own person, and in the persons of his children, the chastisement which he describes as due to the hypocrite; even his own children's eyes shall fail. This interpretation, though questioned by Dillmann, is accepted by commentators generally. Merx alters the text; see note.

6—9. These verses form part of one proposition, the general sense being, Although He has brought me to this state of shame (*v.* 6) and misery (*v.* 7), so that upright men are confounded and indignant, yet the righteous man (*i.e.* Job, conscious, and rightly conscious, of integrity) will hold his course, and become stronger and stronger as the contest proceeds.

6. *and aforetime I was as a tabret*] Rather, **and I am an object of spitting in the face**; see ch. xxx. 10, and compare Num. xii. 14; Deut. xxv. 9. The meaning is supported by the Ethiopic and Chald.

7. *dim*] The dimness of the eye through grief is very frequently alluded to in Scripture, as Gen. xxvii. 1; Deut. xxxiv. 7; Zech. xi. 17; Ps. vi. 7, xxxi. 9: see also ch. xvi. 16.

8. *stir up himself*] Sc. in indignation at their prosperity.

10 But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find *one* wise *man* among you.

11 My days are past, my purposes are broken off, *even* † the thoughts of my heart.

† Heb. *the possessions.*

12 They change the night into day: the light *is* † short because of darkness.

† Heb. *near.*

13 If I wait, the grave *is* mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.

14 I have † said to corruption, Thou *art* my father: to the worm, *Thou art* my mother, and my sister.

† Heb. *cried, or called.*

15 And where *is* now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?

16 They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when *our* rest together *is* in the dust.

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9. *The righteous also*] Or, **Yet the righteous will hold fast his way**, sc. notwithstanding all this cruel treatment and temptation. This verse stands out in strong relief amidst the gloom and hopelessness of Job's complaints; whatever betide him of one thing he is assured, he will "hold fast his integrity," even as God Himself had declared of him.

10. *do ye return*] *i.e.* as for you all, do you, if you think fit, return to the charge, repeat your arguments; it is but what may be expected of you, for I can see no symptom of real wisdom in any of you: a bitter irony, but justified by God's own declaration, xlii. 7, 8.

11—16. No hope but in the grave; there is the ever-recurring thought; the question is, whether Job will find any hope *in* the grave, whether his *wish* will give birth to the hope of a future vindication.

11. Life with its objects and cares must perish: it is already gone.

thoughts] Lit. **possessions**; a fine expression for all that the heart and mind has acquired, and cares to retain, its best thoughts, purposes, and imaginations.

12. *They change*] *i.e.* my pretended comforters mock me by promising me a return of light; see xi. 17. Innocent as Job knows himself to be, he knows full well that life here is not and cannot be true light; at the best transient and full of trouble, to him it is but misery. The last words should be rendered, **light is near in face of darkness**, *i.e.* they say that light must be near at hand, on the supposition of my innocence or penitence, although it is clear that darkness has already set in. The LXX. have ἔθηκα, sc. "I count night as my day, a light near in face of darkness:" but the explanation given above is preferable.

13, 14. These words express one thought with the variety and pertinacity of a spirit dwelling upon its hopelessness and exhausting its misery: there is no hope elsewhere, my only home now is the grave; there is my only rest, all that could comfort my heart, excite in it any sense of joy, is exchanged for rottenness, for the loathsome inmates of the grave. My hope is there, who can see it? To speak of hope on earth in life is a mockery: if there be a hope it is to be found in the grave. Bearing in mind the aspiration of ch. xiv. 13—15 (the wish there so nearly resembling a hope, grounded on a principle which can scarcely exist without suggesting and confirming it), we do not find in this verse an expression of absolute hopelessness. We can scarcely resist the conclusion that although neither Job, nor, as he is well aware, any other living man of his own age, can see any definite ground for hope, he has at the bottom of his heart a feeling which assures him that Sheol, the region of the shadow of death, is not the last word of God to man. The next verse is a further advance towards the solution of the mystery.

16. The interpretation of this verse is encumbered with the greatest difficulties; but it is of so much importance to the whole bearing of the argument that it seems necessary to bring them before the reader. The first clause consists of three words: (1) the first is ambiguous; in other passages where it occurs, it means "boastings," or "parts," *e.g.* "limbs of a man," or "bars," either poles, such as bear the ark, or possibly bars of a gate; hence also, metaphorically, "chieftains." Of these meanings the only one which seems applicable is "bars." The "bars of the pit" will therefore signify "the bars of the gates of Hades, Sheol, the region of death." (2) The pit, or Sheol: about this there is no doubt. (3) "They shall go down;" the plural 3rd person feminine is used. The question is, what is the subject of this clause? Our translation leaves it doubtful. No plural goes before except the word rendered "bars," and that is masculine. This leaves two alternatives; either "hope," in the preceding verse, is taken collectively for "all my hopes," which is very questionable, or "bars," though masculine, yet as standing for gates (feminine), may be followed by a feminine verb. Of this there are many examples in Hebrew, one remarkably near to this passage, Prov. vii. 27 (where דרכי שאול is constructed with יורדות). Merx, also,

(though he renders it "my limbs") takes it to be the true subject of the sentence. If we adopt the former, with most interpreters, we have, "my hopes will go down to the bars of Sheol," will have there their home. This construction is improbable, involving a very harsh metaphor, as though a man's hopes went down to the bars of Sheol when he died, an expression to which it seems impossible to attach a definite meaning. If we take the latter, we have, "the bars of Sheol will go down, will fall, be cast down." The same verb is used of a wood which is cut down and falls, of a falling wall, &c.; see Ges. 'Thes.' p. 625, § 2. The expression is of doubtful meaning, since the bars may fall at the approach or will of a deliverer: and again, it is possible the words may be read interrogatively, will the bars of Hades fall? The former meaning seems not to accord with the state of Job's feelings at the time; it is too definite a hope, it stands out too strongly in relief from the surrounding gloom; but the latter appears to correspond exactly with his inner mind; he asks, is there hope? where is it? who can see it? will the bars of Hades fall? will God "remember me?" "shall I live again?" will God call? shall I answer him? will the Mighty, before Whom "Hell is naked, destruction hath no covering (xxvi. 6)," make both bear witness to him (see xxviii. 22)? will the gates of hell fall down, its bars be broken, its dwellers be delivered? This question is in harmony with the whole under current of thought; it is not indeed equivalent to the expression of a hope, but it is a true aspiration, and, as such, an unconscious prophecy.

16. *when our rest together*] This rendering is defended (by Hahn) in the sense, when I and my hope together rest in the dust. If, however, the interpretation proposed in the preceding note be accepted, the two clauses may be rendered, "will the bars of Sheol fall? Or will there be altogether rest in the grave?"

NOTES on Chap. xvii. 5 and 15.

5. The text is confessedly obscure. Vulg. prædam pollicetur sociis; and LXX. ἀναγγελεῖ; both must have read יגיד, nor have the MSS. any variation. Merx substitutes יאגור, and assumes a proverb, rendering the whole passage thus, "The proverb says 'hire strangers for one's portion, but one's own sons' eyes fail.'" In *v.* 9, also Merx transposes the sentence. Two instances, to say the least, of great rashness.

15. Merx reads בַּדַּי, and renders "my limbs go down to Sheol:" the change of vowel-points is admissible, but the expression has no parallel, and introduces a thought alien to the mind of Job. In ch. xviii. 13, the word occurs twice, but in the sense of "muscles:" see note.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Bildad reproveth Job of presumption and impatience.* 5 *The calamities of the wicked.*

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 How long *will it be ere* ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak.

3 Wherefore are we counted as beasts, *and* reputed vile in your sight?

Chap. XVIII. In this angry and intemperate speech of Bildad it is difficult to discern any advance, or even variety of argument. It consists of vituperations, in which the words used by Job to describe his misery are taken as applicable, universally and exclusively, to the calamities which befall the wicked. There is no suggestion of hope, no admonition even which would indicate the possibility of amendment. Job is to Bildad henceforth simply as one that "knoweth not God," *v.* 21. In the discourses of Job there is a steady onward progress; the distinction between the appearance and the reality continually becomes clearer; his aspirations assume a more definite form, gradually approaching the confines of hope; and the consciousness of inward integrity, with a full perception of man's natural and inherent sinfulness, and his own participation in it through the passions of youth and the infirmity at all seasons of life, finds ever a more forcible and evangelical expression. But in direct contrast with this, in the speeches of each and all the interlocutors, the change is altogether from better to worse, from sympathy to alienation, from well-ordered reasoning to senseless and cruel upbraidings, from vindication of God's justice to uncandid and violent representations of the effects of His vengeance. In the following speech, and in the answer of Job, we find the central crisis of the discussion. On the one hand, the fury of the incensed friends is well-nigh

4 He teareth †himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?

† Heb. *his soul.*

5 Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.

6 The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his ‖candle shall be put out with him.

‖ Or, *lamp.*

7 The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down.

8 For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.

9 The gin shall take *him* by the heel, *and* the robber shall prevail against him.

10 The snare *is* †laid for him in

† Heb. *hidden.*

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exhausted; on the other, the hope of a perfect vindication, (inseparably bound up with an instinctive, though undeveloped and half-conscious belief in a future resurrection,) for the first time takes the form, which has been recognized by believers in all ages as the sublimest utterance of a devout and heaven-taught spirit, brooding on the mystery of life and anticipating its true solution.

1—4. Job is blamed for idle words, contempt of his friends, vain and desperate struggles, and useless aspirations.

2. *end of words*] Bildad thus retorts Job's words against him, see xvi. 3. He had himself first reproached Job for lengthy and idle words (viii. 2), not without some shew of reason, since his own previous discourse had been remarkable at least for brevity and conciseness. Instead of "end of words," many commentators follow Schultens in rendering the Hebrew, "nets of words," or "hunting after words," *i.e.* "how long wilt thou go on artfully and deceitfully devising words for the purpose of entrapping us?" Thus Ew., Hirz. and Hahn, Del., Dillm.; but the rendering of the A. V. gives a satisfactory sense, and is adopted by critics of high authority, Rosen., Ges., Stickel, Vaih., Welte, and Merx, who, however, alters the reading *ketz* for *kintze*.

3. *as beasts*] See xvi. 10, xvii. 4, 10.

reputed vile] Lit. shut up, *i.e.* silenced, looked on as unfit to speak.

4. *teareth himself*] Like a wild beast, probably in reference to the last verse; if we are beasts, mere animals, what canst thou be but a wild beast? Job had accused God of tearing him, xvi. 9; Bildad says he teareth himself, his own struggles are the main cause of his misery.

shall the earth be forsaken] *i.e.* shall the whole course of the world's government be altered to meet your wishes, its unchangeable order, its firm fixed laws? The expression is probably proverbial; it bears a strong resemblance to the Arabic sayings, "the world will not come to an end for his sake," and "the world does not exist for one man." Rosen. The reference to Job's longings for a perfect manifestation of God's justice is clear; there may be a special reference to his last words in ch. xvi.

5—21. The ruin and misery of the wicked, the destruction of his race, the extinction of his very name, are described with much force and variety of imagery, but without any new thought. As in his former speech, Bildad rests altogether on the recorded facts and sayings of the past.

5. *the light*] The lamp, which lights the whole tent.

the spark of his fire] *i.e.* the last spark of the ashes smouldering on the deserted hearth: both images are common in the poems of the Arabians. See Reiske's note on 'Tarapha,' quoted by Rosen. on 'Zohair,' p. 9: both poets belong to the earliest period of Arabic poetry, their poems are in the Moallakat.

6. *The light shall be dark*] A thought borrowed from Job's own sublime description, x. 22. Darkness shall be his light, the extinction of the lamp but a symbol and accident of his own destruction.

and his candle] Or, **and his lamp over him shall be extinguished**: *i.e.* the lamp suspended over him in his tent; see note on *v.* 5.

7. *The steps of his strength*] Or, "his mighty strides." Two points are noted, the robber, accustomed to prowl over a vast expanse, is confined to a narrow space (an allusion to Job's own words, xii. 24, 25, and xiii. 27), and he is ruined by the very craftiness of his own plans. Bildad thus suggests that Job and his family may have been Bedouin robbers: as usual he adopts old proverbial sayings; thus Ibn Doreid, quoted by Rosen., "If a man do not keep within the limits of his powers, his wide steps shall be straitened."

8. His light has been put out, he wanders about in darkness, and falls into the springes which he has set about his robber den to catch the unwary.

9. *the robber*] Or, **the mantrap.** It springs up, catches him, and fastens him down. The rendering is adopted by all modern critics.

the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

11 Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall †drive him to his feet.

† Heb. scatter him.

12 His strength shall be hunger-bitten, and destruction *shall be* ready at his side.

13 It shall devour the †strength of his skin: *even* the firstborn of death shall devour his strength.

† Heb. bars.

14 [a] His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.

[a] chap. 8. 14. & 11. 20. Ps. 112. 10. Prov. 10. 28.

15 It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because *it is* none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

16 His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.

17 [b] His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.

[b] Prov. 2. 22.

18 †He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.

† Heb. They shall drive him.

19 He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.

20 They that come after *him* shall be astonied at his day, as they that ‖ went before †were affrighted.

‖ Or, lived with him.
† Heb. laid hold on horror.

21 Surely such *are* the dwellings of the wicked, and this *is* the place *of him that* knoweth not God.

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11. *Terrors...on every side*] A striking personification; the inward terrors take a bodily form, are realized, and beset him without intermission: the very symptoms, which Job had described so vividly, in the vain hope of exciting compassion, iii. 25, and vii. 14.

drive] As in the margin, "scatter," or, more literally, "startle him to his feet," *i.e.* when he crouches, in the hope of eluding the search after him, or lies down worn out by baffled exertions, some new terror makes him start up and flee.

12. Repeated from Eliphaz, xv. 21.
The rendering of the A.V., questioned by critics (see Bp. Wordsworth), is confirmed by Dillmann; Merx has "his prosperity will be changed into famine."

13. *the strength of his skin*] Lit. "the bars of his skin," *i.e.* the muscles of his body; the same word which is explained in note xvii. 16.

the firstborn of death] A fine, though vague personification of the calamity, whatever it be, whether sword, famine, or disease, which does the work of death, and acts as his emissary. Death has his family; all diseases, sorrows, horrors, which come in his train, or go before him to prepare his way. In the hideous disease which devoured Job's strength, Bildad might see Death's firstborn. Thus the Arabians call a deadly fever, daughter of fate.

14. Or, **He shall be rooted out of his tent, his confidence**, *i.e.* the tent in which he trusted as his stronghold.

it shall bring him] It, *i.e.* the calamity, whatever it be. The "king of terrors," Death, whose firstborn has done his work. This personification of Death rests probably upon an instinctive feeling that for the wicked death is no mere privation of consciousness, bu the entrance into a state of unknown horror. It is not probable that Job identified the King of terrors with Satan, to whose agency he never alludes, although the conjecture has some support in Heb. ii. 14, "him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil." Rabbinical writers call Satan the Prince of Chaos.

15. *It*] *i.e.* the terror, the desolation, which accomplishes his ruin shall have abiding possession of the tent, which will never more be his.

brimstone] As over the site of cities overthrown by divine wrath, and consumed by fire from heaven. There may be a reference to Sodom and Gomorrha. Cf. ch. xv. 34; Gen. xix. 24; Deut. xxix. 23; Ps. xi. 6.

17. *in the street*] Or, **on the face of the land**, *i.e.* in the whole country; see note on ch. v. 10.

18. *into darkness*] Alluding to Job's own repeated expressions of hopelessness, and especially to the close of the last chapter; see also x. 21, 22.

19. *nephew*] **Grandchild.**

dwellings] Or, "places of his sojourning;" the word is expressly chosen to shew that he had no home, but a mere temporary settlement.

20. *They that come after him*] Or, "men of the west;" see note on the next clause.

at his day] *i.e.* the day of his judgment (Ps. xxxvii. 13; Jer. l. 27; Obad. 12), a striking expression, as though that was in truth the only day which belonged to him, as his own by right.

that went before] *i.e.* his contemporaries, or immediate successors, each generation shall hand down the terrible history to remotest time for warning. Thus many commentators; but the words may mean, "men of all

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *Job, complaining of his friends' cruelty, sheweth there is misery enough in him to feed their cruelty.* 21, 28 *He craveth pity.* 23 *He believeth the resurrection.*

THEN Job answered and said,

2 How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

3 These ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed *that* ye [1]make yourselves strange to me.

[1] Or, *harden yourselves against me.*

4 And be it indeed *that* I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.

5 If indeed ye will magnify *yourselves* against me, and plead against me my reproach:

6 Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.

7 Behold, I cry out of [1]wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but *there is* no judgment.

[1] Or, *violence.*

8 He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths.

9 He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown *from* my head.

10 He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath he removed like a tree.

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lands, of the west and of the east:" thus Schult., Umb., Ew., Del., Dillm. and Merx: who reads with the LXX. "and horror seizes the dwellers in the East." Cf. xxi. 6.

21. *that knoweth not God*] The climax of all charges is a direct denial of Job's most solemn protestations. See notes on xvi. 18, 19.

CHAP. XIX. After a brief expostulation (2—4), Job declares, in the strongest possible language, his conviction that the calamities, which he enumerates with greater force and fulness than in any preceding discourse, are not reconcileable with any known principle of the divine government: they come from God, and cannot be justified by such reasonings as those which he has repeatedly refuted (6—20): they ought to excite pity; man ought to sympathize with his fellow when he is smitten by God. This course of thought issues in a complete triumph of the inner principle. He calls attention to the words which he is about to speak, as the only ones which deserve a perpetual record, which sum up the whole of his convictions, and will endure for ever. His cause, being the cause of righteousness, is secure; for God (Who has hitherto but shewn Himself in wrath, in terror, in accusations, as an object of mysterious awe and terror) is Himself his Redeemer, a Redeemer now living in Heaven, hereafter to be manifested in Earth; to be seen after the destruction of Job's whole bodily frame by Job's own eyes. He concludes with an emphatic warning, that they who judge harshly will be judged unsparingly.

2, 3. Three points are urged: his friends' cruelty, their pertinacity, and their injustice.

3. *make yourselves strange*] The original word is obscure, it means either "bewilder," or more probably "maltreat," by injurious imputations, such as they had wrought against Job, especially in the last speeches. Both meanings are supported by Arabic usage. Merx alters the reading for a word which means "combine against me."

4. *with myself*] This may mean, "in my own consciousness," or that, admitting he may have sinned, yet they were scatheless, he had not wronged *them*.

5, 6. A direct statement that, if he be condemned on the ground that God has put him to shame, he is prepared to prove that the providential dispensation, as understood by his friends, is not just. The word is purposely strong, He hath overthrown, or rather perverted me, dealt with me unjustly. It must be borne in mind, that the object of the divine dispensation was precisely the reverse of what Job's friends had assumed it to be; that it was not intended to punish his guilt, but to test and prove his righteousness; interpreted as they interpreted it, it would have been a perversion of justice.

7. Rather, **Lo! I cry aloud, violence!** The word is used as an ejaculation, as probably in Hab. i. 2.

8. *He hath fenced up*, &c.] Cf. Hos. ii. 6. Job has no light, he is utterly in the dark as to the cause of his affliction, and has no power of action; cf. xiii. 27.

9. *glory—crown*] The princely mantle and the crown which he formerly bore, here taken as symbols not merely of dignity and high rank, but of righteousness; see ch. xxix. 14. This was, so to speak, stripped from him when he was treated as a criminal.

10. *removed*] **torn up** as a tree by its roots.

11 He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as *one of* his enemies.

12 His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

13 He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.

14 My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

15 They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

16 I called my servant, and he gave *me* no answer; I intreated him with my mouth.

17 My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's *sake* of † mine own body.

18 Yea, ‖ young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

19 [a] All † my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.

20 My bone cleaveth to my skin ‖ and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

21 Have pity upon me, have pity

† Heb. *my belly.*
‖ Or, *the wicked.*
[a] Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 20.
† Heb. *the men of my secret.*
‖ Or, *as.*

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11. The climax, God deals with him as an enemy. What makes this so appalling but Job's own ineradicable love and faith? The complaint tells of natural weakness, but proves spiritual firmness: God may appear to forsake him, he will not renounce God.

12. *His troops*] All things that work together for man's weal or woe are God's apparitors, the executors of His will. See x. 17. The word "troop" means specially bands sent out to ravage an enemy's country.

raise up their way] *i.e.* make a raised way or road, or **raise a mound**, as against a besieged city. This indicates a deliberate and persevering invasion. Cf. xxx. 12.

13—19. Description of man's cruelty, a result of the sufferings inflicted by God.

13. *brethren*] Comparing vi. 15, Job appears to include the friends who came pretending to console him; brethren may, however, specially refer to near kinsmen, named in the following verse, as "acquaintance" corresponds to "friends," *ib.* Merx alters the reading of the second clause, which he renders "They see it (my misery) and are estranged from me." LXX. ἔγνωσαν.

15. *They that dwell in mine house*] All the household, including the numerous dependents employed in peace and war.

stranger—alien] Both words are carefully chosen; not merely a "stranger," but a "foreigner," a hostis, with no claim even to sympathy.

16. *with my mouth*] Whereas the slightest gesture should have sufficed.

17. This verse is interpreted in various ways. The first clause probably gives the true sense, it accords with the previous notice of Job's wife (see note on chap. ii. 9), and touches a source of peculiarly poignant sufferings. The latter clause probably means: "I am loathsome to the children of my mother's womb," lit. my womb, *i.e.* the womb that bare me; see iii. 10. The first word is ambiguous, and may possibly mean, as the A.V., "I made entreaty," not, however, "for" but "to" the children of my womb. The rendering "loathsome" stands, however, on better authority: Dillm. Merx alters the text, and renders "and I was as a hypocrite to my brothers."

18. *young children*] The word denotes children of wilful insolent character.

19. *inward friends*] **Men of my counsel**, to whom I confided my thoughts and applied for counsel. Cf. Ps. xli. 9; lv. 14.

20. *my bone*, &c.] The bones are distinctly seen through the thin flesh and tightened skin, to which they cleave without any protection of healthy moisture: a symptom not incompatible with the abnormal swelling of vascular tissue in elephantiasis. For "cleave" LXX. ἐσάπησαν, which Merx adopts, and renders "and my flesh rots under my skin."

with the skin of my teeth] The only part of the system as yet unaffected by disease are the teeth with their skin, or gums. In the last stage of all, even the inside of the mouth is attacked, and the voice is no longer articulate. That alone remains to be endured. Thus Ew., Dillm. and others; but it seems more natural to regard this as a description of Job's actual misery, of the teeth no longer covered by the parched lips, protruding with the diseased gums.

21. The last and strongest appeal to human pity, but made in vain; the hand of God had touched him, so they esteemed him "smitten of God and afflicted." That was to them the very ground why they would not pity him. Thus at present the Bedouins cast out a leper, leave him to die in a small black tent, some half-hour's distance from their

upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.

22 Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?

23 † Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

Heb. *Who will give*, &c.

24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

25 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

26 ¹ And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not † another; *though* my reins be consumed † within me.

28 But ye should say, Why per-

¹Or, *After I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God.*
† Heb. *a stranger.*
† Heb. *in my bosom.*

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encampment; he is abandoned even by his nearest relations as mukatal Allah, "slain of God." (Wetzstein, quoted by Delitzsch).

22. *with my flesh*] Thus comparing them to wild beasts. "Eater of flesh," is the Syriac expression for a calumniator, and such is probably the meaning here.

23—29. The great declaration of the book introduced with words of unusual solemnity; whatever may become of other words, whether wrung from him by misery, or expressing yearnings, aspirations, or even hope, Job will have this recorded, for it speaks of a CERTAINTY.

23, 24. *printed in a book*] Set down distinctly on parchment; but a parchment may perish; Job will have an indelible inscription, like a king recording facts of permanent import, decrees that may not be changed, and he will have the character cut deep with steel, and filled up with lead. The antiquity of such inscriptions is no longer a matter of question. See M. Chabas, 'Voyage d'un Egyptien,' p. 345: quoted above, ch. xiii. 26. In "a book," the Heb. has in "*the* book," but LXX. ἐν βιβλίῳ, which Merx is right in preferring.

25. *my redeemer*] See Note below for a critical examination of the whole passage. The word has the general meaning "ransomer," "deliverer,' and specially denotes one who takes up a man's cause, and vindicates his rights either by avenging him on his foes, or by restoring him or his heirs to possessions of which he has been defrauded. Job has already expressed a wish that there might be an *umpire* between him and God: then he goes further and desires an *advocate*, then declares that he has a *witness*, one who exactly knows his rights, in heaven: then calls upon God Himself to be his advocate (see xvi. 21, note 1). He now takes a stronger position, and declares his certainty that there is One Who adds to all these conditions that which gives them solidity, and assures his final triumph: there lives One Who will vindicate his righteousness and clear his cause completely.

He shall stand at the latter day] This clause may be rendered "and He will rise over the dust at the last," *i.e.* at the close of all things, as the final manifestation of God: such, upon the whole, is the most probable meaning of the words. Our translation takes it as adverbial, and gives a substantially correct sense, but "the last" is a word pregnant with meaning, and, while grammatically preferable to the other, coincides better with the whole scope of Job's declaration.

upon the earth] Or rather, "over the dust." This may mean "the grave" not of Job only, but of the whole race of man.

26. *And though after my skin*, &c.] The rendering of the text is preferable to that in the margin. Literally, "and after they have thus destroyed my skin, yet out of my flesh shall I see God:" *i.e.* and after my skin has been thus destroyed (the introduction of "worms," though defensible, is unnecessary and interferes with the simple grandeur of the representation), even then out of my flesh (whether without the flesh, or out of the flesh as the abode of the soul which contemplates its object) shall I see God. How this declaration could be explained away, so as to destroy its testimony to Job's belief in a perpetuity or restoration of personal consciousness, seems a real mystery. Job certainly did not expect that the manifestation would be granted before death (see *after this*, his statement, xxi. 23—26): whether in the body or out of the body (a point left, we might almost say, in intentional ambiguity), he was sure that after the utter destruction of his frame, of the skin itself, the last fragment of his physical being (*v.* 20), he would see God with his own eyes.

27. *and not another*] A very striking declaration of his belief that he himself, himself as the same true living man, would see God. Whether this includes the doctrine of a bodily resurrection may be open to question; but it would be hard to shew that any ancient people believed that complete personal identity was separable from the bodily organization, which is substantially one from the cradle to the grave. The last clause

secute we him, [1] seeing the root of the matter is found in me?

29 Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the sword, that ye may know *there is* a judgment.

[1] Or, *and what root of matter is found in me?*

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probably contains the sense given in our marginal rendering: "my reins are within me consumed with earnest desire;" for the reins and kidneys in the Semitic languages are regarded as the seat of the deepest and tenderest affections, especially of longing. Job, after expressing the certainty, looks into his own bosom, examines his inner man, and accounts for all the grief, which cleaves to him notwithstanding such persuasion, by the bitterness of hope deferred, wearing out his heart with yearnings and longings only to be fulfilled, at some indefinite and unrevealed period, by a personal manifestation of his Redeemer.

28, 29. These two verses present considerable difficulties: see Note below. The probable rendering is this: "If ye shall say, 'how shall we persecute him?' and 'the root of the matter is found in me,' *then* be ye afraid of the sword for yourselves, for scorn is one of the sins of the sword, so that ye will know that there is a judgment." If this rendering be accepted, the former verse would describe the acts and words of Job's persecutors, who cast about how they may heap indignities upon him, and attribute the root or cause of all that has happened to his own sin: the second verse, 29, warns them of the sure penalty, the sword of divine wrath will punish them deservedly; for such burning scorn is a capital offence, and they will learn by their own experience that there is a righteous Judge.

NOTE on CHAP. XIX. 25—27.

The interpretation of this passage is so important that it will justify a detailed examination of every word.

25. ואני, and I. The form of ו is disputed. Some take it to be merely expletive, serving to introduce a declaration like the Greek ὅτι. Schultens renders it Enimvero ego. It is certainly emphatic, "but I for my part."

ידעתי. I know, absolutely; cognitum habeo. The meaning of ידע is not questioned, the root is common to the Aryan and Semitic languages, vid, Sanscrit, video, Fεῖδω.

גאלי חי, my Redeemer liveth. The literal rendering is not questioned. The Goel, however, means any one who has the right and duty to vindicate one who has suffered wrong. Job certainly did not believe that any man was in that position; the only Goel he could possibly rely upon was the living God.

ואחרון: the meaning given in the note above is well defended by Gesenius: postremus, ultimus, novissimus; and as in this passage, postremo. Thus too Merx, *zuletzt*. The adverbial sense is questioned by Ewald, who renders the word ein Nachmann, a survivor, one who succeeds to a man's rights, and has to defend his cause: but although Ewald explains the word thus by reference to the old system of blood-right, he takes it to mean God, Who in this case is the only conceivable defender. The chief objection, a very serious if not conclusive one, is that no such meaning can be shewn to attach to the word either in Hebrew, or the cognate dialects.

על עפר. Gesenius renders this in orbe terrarum, but the meaning is very questionable, nor is it sustained by the passages to which he refers, excepting perhaps ch. xli. 25, where it seems rather to mean dry land, as contrasted with Water. Hahn, Hirzel and Umbreit render it Erdboden; thus too the ancient Versions, LXX. ἐπὶ γῆς, Vulg. de terra (it stands alone in applying the words to Job, de terra surrecturus sum); Syr. ܥܠ ܐܪܥܐ, super terram, followed as throughout this book by the Arabic; the Targum uses the word of the text. It is, after all, questionable whether any passage can be pointed out in which עפר is simply equivalent to the earth: and it seems more probable that "over dust" means over the grave. In Arabic all the words for dust have this meaning, as سفاة, تربة, and ثرى. Thus Merx, auf (meinem) Grabe.

יקום, will rise up, as a conqueror, or rather as a Redeemer. A phrase nearly corresponding to this occurs in the Koran, Sur. IX. 85:

ولا تقم علي قبره and thou shalt not stand over his grave, *i.e.* to make supplication for him.

So far it appears that Job asserts his belief that although he seems to be utterly abandoned by God, yet that very God is surely his Redeemer, and that at the last day, when this dispensation is terminated, He will rise up to vindicate his cause.

26. ואחר, and after; either a preposition or adverb, probably the former, as Ewald takes it, "after my skin," *i.e.* when my skin is no more: if taken adverbially the meaning will be, "and after they have thus destroyed my skin:" an easier construction, but apparently requiring a different arrangement of the words. The rendering "my awakening," see

marg., has in its favour xiv. 12; but it impedes the construction with the following words.

נקפו, نقف expresses extreme violence, fregit caput ut cerebrum appareret, Kamus ap. Freytag. It must be taken impersonally since no subject is expressed; it is destroyed. After my skin is utterly destroyed.

זאת. Ewald, who is followed by several critics, renders the word "this" construed with "my skin;" another rendering seems better, considering the arrangement of the words and the difficulty of joining זאת to עור, a masculine noun, "and after my skin is destroyed thus." As Job speaks he points to the mouldering skin.

ומבשרי, literally "and from my flesh:" but the meaning of both words "and" and "from my flesh" is contested. The former word *and* may either serve to connect, or to distinguish this clause from the preceding words. This depends however upon the general bearing of the words following. *From my flesh.* So far as the grammatical construction is concerned this may mean, (1) "from my body," viz. out of my body, by the medium of my bodily senses, or as our A.V. renders it, "in my flesh." This is, in fact, the regular and obvious construction; after a verb of looking out, the place or room, from which the observer looks, is invariably connected with it by the preposition מן, see Ges. s. v. Thus the Vulg.: In carne meâ. The Targum has מבסרי, which Walton renders, de carne meâ. It is hard to see what the LXX. could have had before them, or how they understood the expression. This rendering is adopted by Rosenmüller, e carne meâ,—illa interpretatio et usui particulæ מן, et rei de quâ agitur, magis accommodata videtur. Thus too, Welte and Umbreit, in the 'Stud. u. Krit.,' quoted by Hahn.

But (2) it may also mean, without my flesh, out of my body, thus Renan "privé de ma chair;" scarcely, however, as Hahn and Umbreit, *in loc.*, would understand it, with a body so corrupt and destroyed as to be virtually extinct, a meaning utterly without authority. The word בשר according to Fürst is used specially of healthy flesh.

The second interpretation would be an assertion that death would be followed by an admission at some future time to the beatific vision, a possible explanation borne out by passages in the Psalms, but of which no other trace is found in this book; the former involves a belief in a future restoration to bodily life. The objections to this do not rest upon the grammatical construction, but wholly upon doctrinal prepossessions.

אחזה לי, whom I shall see for myself: the only question is as to the meaning of לי. In Ps. cxviii. 6, it is rendered "on my side." Merx renders it "mir zu Gunsten;" and this is probably the true meaning.

and mine eyes shall behold, and not another] The translation is literal; the word "another" must mean, a different and strange being, such as would be the case had Job supposed that a vindication after death would only be witnessed by survivors. What he asserts is, that in his own perfect, individual integrity of being he will see his Redeemer at that day.

Merx gives a rendering of the latter part of the chapter from "Though my reins," &c. *v.* 27, which appears very probable. "My reins yearn to hear you say, Why do we persecute him? And *to acknowledge* that the root of the matter is found in me. Be on your guard against reviling: for wrath due to transgressions will come *on you* because you adopt unjust chiding." In *v.* 29 he reads חרף for חרב, and חמת עונות תבא for חמה עונות חרב, and lastly מדון for שדון.

CHAPTER XX.

Zophar sheweth the state and portion of the wicked.

THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for *this* †I make haste.

3 I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

† Heb. *my haste is in me.*

CHAP. XX. Zophar repeats with more vehemence, and even coarseness, the old and well-nigh exhausted argument to prove that wickedness and hypocrisy inevitably bring with them such misery as that which has befallen Job. Like the other speakers he takes Job as the representative of guilty sufferers; each separate affliction is a witness, all his griefs tell one tale, the hatred of God and the certainty of Job's complete destruction. The whole speech is singularly characteristic of the speaker, who appears no more in the dialogue. He has reached the limit beyond which nothing can be said, and is dismissed, so to speak, with contempt.

2—4. The meaning of these words, which in their confusion and obscurity shew the perturbed state of the speaker's mind, is, that he is constrained to answer by the effect upon his spirit of Job's wilful ignorance of the oldest and most universally received of all doctrines, that which declares the certain and speedy destruction of the wicked.

2. *Therefore*] *i.e.* because Job denies that his sufferings prove guilt, and holds fast to

4 Knowest thou *not* this of old, since man was placed upon earth,

5 [a] That the triumphing of the wicked *is* † short, and the joy of the hypocrite *but* for a moment?

[a] Psal. 37. 35, 36. † Heb. *from near.*

6 Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the † clouds;

† Heb. *cloud.*

7 *Yet* he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where *is* he?

8 He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.

9 The eye also *which* saw him shall *see him* no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

10 ‖ His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods.

‖ Or, *The poor shall oppress his children.*

11 His bones are full *of the sin* of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.

12 Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, *though* he hide it under his tongue;

13 *Though* he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still † within his mouth:

† Heb. *in the midst of his palate.*

14 *Yet* his meat in his bowels is turned, *it is* the gall of asps within him.

15 He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

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his integrity and belief in an absolute vindication after death.

my thoughts] sc. anxious, perplexed thoughts; see note iv. 13.

and for this I make haste] Or, **and therefore my haste is in me**, *i.e.* this it is that urges me to speak out earnestly.

3. *the check of my reproach*] *i.e.* a check, or reproof, intended to put me to shame, such as that which closes the last speech of Job.

of my understanding] Rather, **out of**; the meaning appears to be, that his spirit cannot bear such reproof, but draws an answer from the understanding, which is represented as a storehouse, in which the results of experience and reflection are kept for the use of man's spirit. Thus Hahn, Dillm., and others, following the construction of the LXX., ἐκ τῆς συνέσεως.

4. *of old*] Literally, "from eternity;" the expression refers however to the eternity of the principle, not of its exemplifications, which have for their limit the first appearance of man on the earth. Zophar speaks generally, but the words imply cognizance of the record in Genesis, preserved doubtless among all the descendants of Abraham. A Hebrew would, however, naturally have alluded to the passage more distinctly: no example would have been more to the point than that of Adam.

7. The coarseness of this simile must be attributed to the speaker; he looks on Job on his heap of ashes, and sees in him an object loathsome and disgusting. The reading is disputed by some modern commentators on æsthetic grounds, and a different one is suggested from the LXX., "when he seems to be established," or, with a slight modification, "in proportion to his greatness." The rendering of the A.V. is probably quite correct: cf. 1 K. xiv. 10. Merx, however, is probably right in referring the expression to the dung of cattle, of which the heap, on which Job sat, was formed; see note on ch. ii. 18. The expression is harsh, but less coarse than it appears.

8. *as a dream*] cf. Isa. xxix. 7.

9. *his place*, &c.] cf. vii. 10.

10. *seek to please*] The word so rendered is doubtful. Interpreters are divided between this sense and that given in the margin, but incline upon the whole to prefer the very forcible representation of children compelled to seek the favour of those whom their father had impoverished.

11. *sin of his youth*] A bitter and most cruel taunt, referring to Job's touching remonstrance, xiii. 26; and shutting out all hope of forgiveness, much more of such vindication as that anticipated by Job, xix. 25. The insertion of the word "sin" may thus be justified, but the Hebrew probably means, "his bones were full of his youth," *i.e.* were full of youthful vigour.

12—15. The figures are singularly repulsive, they are recorded as indications of a fierce and intolerant spirit; and, though they may find an echo in the conscience of a reprobate, are such as should never be applied by a Christian to his fellow-man.

14. *is turned*] sc. to poison. An Arabic poet has a saying like Zophar's, "crime may be enjoyed, but not digested."

the gall of asps] Bitterness and poison are identified by Hebrew writers. The notion that the viper's poison resided in the gall was general among the ancients; see Plin. 'N. H.' XI. 75.

16 He shall suck the poison of asps: the viper's tongue shall slay him.

17 He shall not see the rivers, [1] the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.

18 That which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow *it* down: [†] according to *his* substance *shall* the restitution *be*, and he shall not rejoice *therein*.

19 Because he hath [†] oppressed *and* hath forsaken the poor; *because* he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not;

20 [b] Surely he shall not [†] feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.

21 [1] There shall none of his meat be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods.

22 In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the [1] wicked shall come upon him.

23 *When* he is about to fill his belly, *God* shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain *it* upon him while he is eating.

24 He shall flee from the iron weapon, *and* the bow of steel shall strike him through.

25 It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors *are* upon him.

26 All darkness *shall be* hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall

[1] Or, *streaming brooks.*
[†] Heb. *according to the substance of his exchange.*
[†] Heb. *crushed.*
[b] Eccles. 5. 13, 14.
[†] Heb. *know.*
[1] Or, *There shall be none left for his meat.*
[1] Or, *troublesome.*

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17. *the rivers*, &c.] The usual images of paradisiacal happiness reserved, as Zophar believes, in the shape of temporal prosperity for the righteous upon earth. Compare Ex. iii. 8, 17, xiii. 5. See also Ovid, 'Met.' I. 111; Theoc. 'Id.' V. 124.

18. The general sense is clear, but the expressions are obscure and much disputed. The following interpretation (Ew., Del., Dillm.), upon the whole, seems preferable:

"Yielding up what he labours for, he shall not swallow it,
According to the value of his merchandize shall he not rejoice:"

In other words, he will not enjoy even what he earns by hard labour, and whatever his success may be as a merchant his wealth will bring him no joy. Zophar alludes of course to the former estate of Job, cultivating vast tracts of land with his oxen, and deriving great wealth from the commerce, in which he employed 3000 camels.

19. *Because he hath oppressed*] This charge had already been suggested, now Zophar assumes that it is proved by the results.

20. **For he knew no rest in his belly, and so shall he not be saved with that which he desired**: sc. his insatiable greed shall be punished; what he desired will be taken from him. For the first clause Merx suggests "for there is no deliverance for him in his goods." This involves more than one doubtful correction.

21. The first clause means rather, "he left nothing in his eating," *i. e.* he lived as a glutton, not reserving even the fragments of his food for the poor. The latter clause should be, **therefore shall his prosperity not endure.**

22. *sufficiency*] This is probably the true sense of the Hebrew word, which does not occur elsewhere. In Syriac it has this meaning.

the wicked] Or, **the sufferer**, *i.e.* all who have been brought to sorrow by him; cf. *v.* 5.

23. The first clause is far more forcible in the original: **This shall come to pass; in order to fill his belly He shall cast upon him the burning of His wrath.** God's wrath shall be his meat and drink.

while he is eating] Rather, "for his food;" but the construction is not certain, it may mean, "with his food."

24—26. The following verses describe the fate of a brigand slain in a foray, such as Zophar assumes may have been undertaken by Job's dependents or children.

24. *the iron weapon*] Or, "armour," *i. e.* from the heavy-armed soldier.

25. *It is drawn*] Or, "He draweth it (the arrow), and it cometh from his body, and flasheth from his gall, terrors come upon him." Each word gives a distinct image. Conquered in the battle he flees, the steel bow sends its arrow, it reaches him, he draws it out; but the life-blood follows the glittering point, and the "king of terrors" seizes on his prey; cf. xviii. 14.

26. *All darkness shall be hid in his secret places*] Or, **entire darkness is reserved for his treasures.** The chief being slain, all that he has stored up remains in darkness; he has covered it up when he set out on his foray; there it remains until fire, kindled by no human hands, consumes it, together with all that is left in his tent: cf. xv. 34, xviii. 15. For "treasures" Syr. has children, which Merx adopts.

consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.

27 The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him.

28 The increase of his house shall depart, *and his goods* shall flow away in the day of his wrath.

29 This *is* the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage † appointed unto him by God.

† Heb. *of his decree from God.*

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Job sheweth that even in the judgment of man he hath reason to be grieved.* 7 *Sometimes the wicked do so prosper, as they despise God.* 16 *Sometimes their destruction is manifest.* 22 *The happy and unhappy are alike in death.* 27 *The judgment of the wicked is in another world.*

BUT Job answered and said,

2 Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations.

3 Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.

4 As for me, *is* my complaint to man? and if *it were so*, why should not my spirit be † troubled?

5 † Mark me, and be astonished, and lay *your* hand upon *your* mouth.

† Heb. *shortened?*
† Heb. *Look unto me.*

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27. A direct answer to Job's appeal, xvi. 18, 19. There is a witness in heaven, but one that will reveal his guilt; earth will answer his cry, but only to rise in indignation against him.

Chap. XXI. The last speech completed all that can be insinuated against Job, but it reaches him, as yet, by implication only. Zophar states what he professes to regard as general truths; if he describes exactly what he sees or conjectures touching Job's condition and character, he does not name him; that last insult is reserved for the leader of the party in the last colloquy, see xxii. 5—11. Job in his answer shews that he fully understands the insinuation, xxi. 27, 28, but confines himself to the general argument, and in language of unparalleled boldness maintains the converse of the proposition: far from perishing, the wicked live, grow old, keep their power, their children are established, they and theirs live and die in prosperity, joyous, careless; they renounce God openly, and with complete impunity, a common fate awaits all, there is no sign of the temporal retribution of which dogmatists speak so confidently. This speech virtually closes the second day's colloquy: its import seems to have been misunderstood; but what is the real object of the trials permitted by God but to demonstrate that goodness may exist, that a man thoroughly sincere, perfect, and righteous, may hold fast his integrity though every shadow of hope connected with life be withdrawn? Job feels and declares not only that his own "hedge" has been removed, and that every conceivable calamity has befallen him, destroying the spring of life, and leaving him apparently blasted by God's wrath, an object of loathing and scorn to the representations of humanity; but also that the whole scheme of the world's history proves there is no general connection here between goodness and happiness; men who renounce God prosper to the end, and then but share the fate of all mankind; all lie down alike in the dust and the worms cover them. Thus also with regard to the fear and love of God; though quite convinced that it will bring no recompense, he abjures the "counsels of the wicked," *v.* 16, and so proves that his innermost convictions are stedfast. The expressions, which in the extremity of his perplexity and provocation he uses, are harsh and intemperate: he dogmatizes, and lays himself open to the charge of impiety, but the full force of his own argument, and the scope and bearing of the whole transaction, could not have been brought out had any trust in a temporal restoration and renewal of prosperity remained. Satan might still have urged that fear and love were alike selfish.

2. *your consolations*] As they can find no words of comfort for their friend, all he asks is that they may attend to his argument; not that he expects to convince them, or to excite any feeling but scorn; see *v.* 3; it suffices him to speak out the whole truth. LXX. followed by Merx, "let not such be your consolations." The rendering in the text is far more probable.

4. The meaning of this verse appears to be; Job is not seeking an answer to his inward questionings by reference to human experience or reason, if he were doing so, his trouble, or "impatience" would be justified: for what does experience prove, but that wicked men may often prosper to the end, and the righteous perish without compensation? This translation is literal, and seems preferable to that of Dillmann and Renan: Est-ce d'un homme que je me plains? "Troubled," or as in the margin "be shortened," that it is "be impatient," unable to hold out any longer; cf. Exod. vi. 9.

5, 6. A very important and necessary introduction to the following statements. Job is quite aware of the horror and indignation which they must excite; none feels this more

6 Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

7 [a] Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

[a] Ps. 17. 10. & 73. 12. Jer. 12. 1. Hab. 1. 16.

8 Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

9 Their houses † *are* safe from fear, neither *is* the rod of God upon them.

† Heb. are *peace from fear*.

10 Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

12 They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

13 They spend their days [1] in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

[1] Or, *in mirth*.

14 [b] Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

[b] chap. 22. 17.

15 What *is* the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

16 Lo, their good *is* not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

17 How oft is the [1] candle of the wicked put out! and *how oft* cometh

[1] Or, *lamp*.

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deeply than he does; he trembles, is terrified, shudders at the contemplation of apparent injustice in God's dealings with His creatures.

6. *taketh hold*] See note on xviii. 20.

7. The whole question is stated at once; no attempt has hitherto been made to meet the difficulty; on the contrary the facts have been studiously, and, as Job holds, dishonestly, ignored; if wickedness, as the old dogma asserts, see xx. 5, brings certain and speedy destruction, how dispose of the fact that wicked men not only live, but live to advanced age, and retain their power and prosperity to the last? Cf. ch. xii. 6, and compare Asaph's treatment of the subject in Psalm lxxiii.

8. Thus again the precise reverse of what Zophar, xx. 10, Bildad, xviii. 19, Eliphaz, v. 4, had asserted, is true of the children of the wicked. Job, however, limits his statement; he does not say their seed is established after them, but during their own life. For his genuine conviction, see chap. xxvii. 14.

9. This meets such statements as xviii. 14, 15.

rod of God] As on Job, see ch. ix. 34.

11. *like a flock*] Free and sportive, like flocks in the open pastures.

12. *organ*] Or, "the pipe," the pipe of reeds, or the flute used by shepherds. In fact, the meaning of the word "organ" in the Vulg., LXX. and in our A.V. is the double flute, or rather, the Pandean pipe. See Gen. iv. 21.

13. *wealth*] Lit. "good;" either word may stand, if taken in the sense of prosperity.

in a moment] Without any sickness, anguish of mind, or signs of God's displeasure. "The wicked have no bands in their death." Yet even here is an undercurrent of thought leading to the true conclusion; no hope is suggested after death. LXX. they sleep in the repose of Hades.

14, 15. These men therefore live and die in practical atheism, are simple secularists; they do with impunity in their day of enjoyment just what Satan had affirmed Job would do in hopelessness, they "renounce God." The threefold rejection should be noted—they care not to *know* His ways, or to *serve* Him, or to be in *communion* with Him.

16. *Lo, their good is not in their hand*] The meaning of this obscure statement is much contested; see Note below. It appears to be, their prosperity is not the result of their own labour, it comes to them from another source; in other words, it is a result of the divine government, which therefore must depend upon some principle unrevealed, and inconceivable; the only point of which Job feels quite sure is, that the principle is not that which is vindicated by his friends. The latter clause is most important: in the same breath that Job declares the prosperity of the wicked to be a gift of providence, he abjures their counsels: he thus declares that, whatever betide them or him, he will not forsake God: a declaration, taking the circumstances into consideration, which reaches the sublimity of St Paul's glorious climax: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Rom. viii. 35. The Apostle had the sure and certain knowledge of a truth which presented itself to Job's mind only in the form of a longing, a yearning, an aspiration, at the most as a subjective conviction based on no external revelation of God's purposes. Merx alters the text, omitting "not" in the

their destruction upon them! *God* distributeth sorrows in his anger.

18 They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm † carrieth away.

19 God layeth up ‖ his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know *it*.

20 His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

21 For what pleasure *hath* he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

22 Shall *any* teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.

23 One dieth † in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

24 His ‖ breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.

25 And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.

26 They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

27 Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* ye wrongfully imagine against me.

† Heb. *stealeth away*.
‖ That is, *the punishment of his iniquity*.
† Heb. *in his very perfection*, or, *in the strength of his perfection*.
‖ Or, *milk pails*.

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first clause, and reading "from Him" in the second: thus putting words into Job's mouth approaching to blasphemy.

17—21. The bearing of these verses upon the argument is obscured in our A.V. Job challenges his opponents to prove their assertions. How often, he asks, does it happen, as you say, that the torch of the wicked is put out? that calamity comes upon them? that God apportions sorrows (or snares) to them? that they are as straw before the wind, as chaff which the storm takes suddenly away?

19—21. The first clause states the dogma—God, you say, reserves his guilt, *i.e.* its punishment for his children: nay, Job answers, let God requite the man himself, and he shall know it: his own eyes would then see his ruin; he would, as he deserves, drink himself the wrath of the Almighty. If the number of his own months be completed (*i.e.* if he has lived out his allotted time), what cares he about the prosperity of his house after him? Throughout the preceding statement the references to the arguments of Job's friends are clear and unmistakeable. Many phrases so closely resemble passages in the Psalms, Proverbs and even later books, as to leave no doubt of their common origin and mutual bearings. Whether the author of this book thus intentionally denied what other ministers of the word asserted, or whether they vindicated the truth, which in his perplexity and anguish Job ignores, and distinctly re-asserted the general rule of Providence, that wickedness and misery are correlatives, is a question to which a believer in the inspiration of Holy Scripture can give but one answer, and that is conclusive as to the antiquity of the book of Job. See Note below.

22. *Shall any teach*, &c.] This question touches the principle. What Job infers from the facts, which made him tremble and shudder, is simply that any attempts to lay down a plan for the divine government must be futile. God judgeth the high, that is, He condemns those who presume to scan the secrets of His Will. Compare Ps. cxxxi. 1. By "the high" many commentators understand the angels; but the explanation above given seems better adapted to the context, and it is well defended by Hahn. The LXX. render it σοφούς, Vulg. excelsos. The Syr. has the same word as the Hebrew, probably meaning "the proud."

23—26. A reiteration of the statement that, so far as experience shews, one event happens to all: whether preceded or not by failure of strength, disease and misery, death comes alike to all, all lie down in the dust, all alike are the prey of worms. The difference between this and the former statement is, that whereas Job here shews the equality of the lot of all in death, he there drew out the prosperity of the wicked in life.

24. *His breasts*] "Sides," or "pails." The Hebrew word occurs only in this passage, and is not found in the cognate dialects. The meaning is doubtful. The marg. "milk-pails" follows the Targum. The Old Versions have viscera, or latera, Syr. This is preferred by Gesen. Compare Ps. xvii. 14, "whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure." The A.V. is conjectural and not probable.

27. *your thoughts*] All the speakers had insinuated Job's guilt; none as yet had openly charged him with crimes committed before his ruin; but he felt every blow, and understood the exact bearing of every remark.

devices] The expression is carefully chosen; the original word is ambiguous, "devices," whether simply ingenious, or, more commonly, crafty, and disingenuous.

28 For ye say, Where *is* the house of the prince? and where *are* †the dwelling places of the wicked?

† Heb. *the tent of the tabernacles of the wicked?*

29 Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens,

30 [c] That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to †the day of wrath.

c Prov. 16. 4.

† Heb. *the day of wraths.*

31 Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him *what* he hath done?

32 Yet shall he be brought to the †grave, and shall †remain in the tomb.

† Heb. *graves.*
† Heb. *watch in the heap.*

33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and every man shall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him.

34 How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth †falsehood?

† Heb. *transgression?*

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28. *ye say*] Cf. xx. 6, 7; xv. 34; xviii. 21.

29—32. The meaning of this paragraph is contested: the most probable interpretation seems to be this. Job bids his opponents ask the merest passers-by, the least observant of men, what experience tells them? what are their tokens, *i.e.* their memorable events, the accounts they have to give of the past, and the lessons which they have learned from them? Is it not that the wicked, far from being cut off, are actually preserved *at* (not "to," as in A. V.) the day of destruction, and brought forth, that is removed out of the way, in the day of wrath? Job does not assert that this is universally the case, but that it occurs so often as to invalidate the conclusions of his opponents: whatever be the real principle they do not know it, and ought to own their ignorance.

29. *their tokens*] *i.e.* their accounts of the matter.

31. Two interpretations are proposed, each of which may be drawn from the words, (1) who brings the wicked man's sins home to him? who accuses and punishes him? or (2) who can give an account of God's ways to His face? or repays Him what He has done? The former is preferable, it suits the context better, and flows more readily from the words.

32. *brought*] The word implies, brought in state with a procession of mourners. So the rich man "died, and was buried."

shall remain in the tomb] Or, "shall watch over his tomb." The meaning is doubtful: what Job asserts certainly is, that so far from the remembrance of the wicked perishing for ever, it survives his death, and is preserved by his sepulchre. If, as seems very probable, Job has before his mind a sepulchre with the effigy of the departed over it, as in contemporary monuments of Egypt, it is a very natural and striking figure to say, the man keeps watch over his own tomb. But the word rendered "tomb" means properly "a mound" or barrow. A figure placed on such a barrow, whether recumbent or standing, would be even more suggestive of Job's thought. It is rather curious that the Hebrew word here used, Gadish, corresponds very nearly with the Egyptian Kares, or Garish (r and d are constantly interchanged, being scarcely distinguishable in old Semitic), a sarcophagus, on which the recumbent figure of the deceased was invariably placed, the likeness of the living features being carefully preserved. The custom was adopted by the Phœnicians, as we know from the sarcophagus of Ashmunazar; and the inscription on that would be a good illustration of the expression, "he watches over his tomb." It consists mainly of adjurations that no man shall violate his resting-place. Such adjurations are common on Egyptian monuments of a date far earlier than that attributed to Job. This custom removes the objection of Rœdiger (see Ges. 'Thes.' p. 1473), who finds it difficult to conceive that the defunct should be represented as keeping watch over his own monument, either to protect it from insult, or to preserve his memory. Ewald, Hirzel, and Renan, accept this natural and striking figure.

33. *sweet unto him*] The grave is but a place of rest to him, earth lies light upon him (sit tibi terra levis), in his fair and honoured resting-place by the running stream (valley or wady).

Allusion has been already made to the parable on which all Job's assertions are completely confirmed. The rich man lives luxuriously, dies without any mark of judgment, is buried honourably, and leaves his substance to his family. What men saw and knew of him was just what Job and his opponents knew of the wicked; the after awakening was unrevealed. Job sees all this; but it neither leads him to give up the cause of goodness, nor tempts him to turn away from God.

34. *falsehood*] Stript of all artifices, reduced to the ultimate principle, there remains nothing but deceit, a false pretence of honour to God, and real treachery to your friend.

Thus ends the second colloquy.

NOTES on CHAP. XXI. 16, 20.

16. The Vulg. has Veruntamen quia non sunt in manu eorum bona sua. Because, notwithstanding all their prosperity they are not masters of it. A true statement, but not bearing on the argument. The LXX. must have read מנו for מני, in the second clause, which they render ἔργα δ' ἀσεβῶν οὐκ ἐφορᾷ. The reasoning is good, but the reading seems conjectural. Ew. understands the meaning to be that their prosperity is not in their own power, has no independence or security thus adopting the Vulg. Merx adopts the reading of the LXX.

20. Merx inserts לא after כי and renders the passage "That the wicked is not reserved for the day of terror, is not brought to the day of wrath." This is mere conjecture.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *Eliphaz sheweth that man's goodness profiteth not God.* 5 *He accuseth Job of divers sins.* 21 *He exhorteth him to repentance, with promises of mercy.*

THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

2 Can a man be profitable unto God, ‖ as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?

3 *Is it* any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or *is it* gain *to him*, that thou makest thy ways perfect?

4 Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?

5 *Is* not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?

6 For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and † stripped the naked of their clothing.

7 Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.

8 But *as for* † the mighty man, he had the earth; and the † honourable man dwelt in it.

9 Thou hast sent widows away

‖ Or, *if he may be profitable*, doth his *good success* depend *thereon?*

† Heb. *stripped the clothes of the naked.*

† Heb. *the man of arm.*

† Heb. *eminent, or, accepted for countenance.*

Third Colloquy, xxii.—xxvi.

CHAP. XXII. **2—4.** The object of Eliphaz is to shew that he is right in inferring guilt from punishment. He argues that since God cannot be moved by any considerations, which affect human judgments, His ways must be altogether righteous, and just. This conclusion is not drawn out: he leaves Job to draw it out for himself; this is usual with the Hebrew writers, and the Semites generally; the premiss is stated, the inference omitted.

2. The second clause may probably be rendered, **Nay, for the wise man profits himself**, the benefit comes to him, not to God, though it comes from Him. The word rendered "profit" occurs in this sense only here, and in a previous discourse of Eliphaz, ch. xv. 3. The same thought occurs not unfrequently in the Koran; see Sur. xvii. 17. See Note below.

3. *perfect*] The word is used here and elsewhere with special reference to Job's character, see i. 1.

4. *for fear of thee*] This seems to allude to Job's remonstrances, as though they implied a claim to consideration amounting to reverence or fear: (thus, the Vulg., LXX., Hahn, Renan, Hirz.;) but the construction is doubtful, and the meaning may be, "will God reprove thee for thy fear of Him, can He punish thee for piety? Nay, the reproof and judgment presuppose, and prove thy guilt:" thus, Ew., Dillm., and Merx.

5. Here, for the first time, Eliphaz distinctly charges Job with guilt, the exact nature of which he infers from the special punishment. The wickedness must have been great, the iniquities infinite, which called for such penalties.

6. *for nought*] *i.e.* without cause or reasonable motive, not being in need of it. The first charge is thus suggested by the opportunities of oppression which Job, as a rich man, must have had, and is assumed to have used.

stripped the naked] Here, as elsewhere (cp. Isa. xx. 2; John xxi. 7; James ii. 15), the word naked means "thinly clad." Thus also in classic writers, as Hesiod, Εργ. 291; Aristoph. Lys. 77. The act would have been illegal in Palestine; see Ex. xxii. 25—27.

8. *the mighty man*] Lit. "man of arm," *i.e.* of strong arm. According to Eliphaz, Job had employed his riches in maintaining sturdy supporters of his injustice, and surrounding himself with favourites; "*honourable men*," rather, **men accepted for favour**, lit. countenance, *i.e.* favourites with no deserts. The charge may be that Job, as prince and judge, had not repressed violence; but the other explanation is more forcible and satisfactory.

9. *widows...fatherless*] For Job's answer, see xxix. 12, 13, and xxxi. 16, 18. No charge could affect him more deeply, and he dwells

empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

10 Therefore snares *are* round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee;

11 Or darkness, *that* thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.

12 *Is* not God in the height of heaven? and behold †the height of the stars, how high they are!

† Heb. *the head of the stars.*

13 And thou sayest, ‖How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

‖ Or, *What.*

14 Thick clouds *are* a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

15 Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?

16 Which were cut down out of time, †whose foundation was overflown with a flood:

† Heb. *a flood was poured upon their foundation.*

17 [a]Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do ‖for them?

[a] ch. 21. 14. ‖ Or, *to them?*

18 Yet he filled their houses with good *things*: but [b]the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

[b] ch. 21. 16

19 [c]The righteous see *it*, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn.

[c] Psal. 107. 42.

20 Whereas our ‖substance is not cut down, but ‖the remnant of them the fire consumeth.

‖ Or, *estate.* ‖ Or, *their excellency.*

21 Acquaint now thyself ‖with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.

‖ That is, *with God.*

22 Receive, I pray thee, the law

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upon it with unusual fulness in his two answers. Compare the words of Chnumhotep, quoted Vol. I. p. 450.

10, 11. Hence the snares, the fear, the darkness, and the overwhelming deluge of calamities.

11. *Or darkness, that thou canst not see*] Rather, **Or seest thou not the darkness, and deluge of waters that covers thee?** Eliphaz assumes that Job is unable to discern the cause, and therefore the justice, of the afflictions which threaten him with destruction; he cannot see them in their true light. There is evidently here a reference to the Deluge, which is distinctly mentioned below, v. 16. LXX. τὸ φῶς σου σκότος ἀπέβη: which Merx accepts, altering the text.

12—20. Eliphaz here reasons against the assumption, which, in his opinion, underlies the whole argument of Job in the preceding chapter. The denial of an actual or universal connection between misfortune and crimes is to him tantamount to a denial of God's knowledge, and justice. Far from listening to Job's explicit declaration to the contrary, xxi. 16, Eliphaz presumes that he adopts the principles of men who rejoice in unjust prosperity, and repeats his own words as a bitter taunt.

12. *the height of the stars*] Or, as in the marg., **the head of the stars**: an expression which may mean, "the highest of the stars" (stellarum verticem, Vulg.), or "the stars of the milky way," more probably the former.

14. *circuit*] Or, **vault.** Eliphaz assumes that Job denies God's providential government of earth, with reference to his complaints, ch. xxi. 7—18: as though he had adopted the notion that God confines His care to the heaven where He dwells, ignoring all earthly concerns: cf. Isai. xxix. 15; Ezek. viii. 12, ix. 9; Ps. lxxiii. 11; xciv. 7.

15. *Hast thou marked*] Rather, **wilt thou keep?**

16. *out of time*] *i.e.* by an untimely end. The word rendered "cut down" means literally "were seized," or caught and borne away by the flood. It is peculiar to this book, occurring xvi. 8. The second clause, *whose foundation*, &c., should be rendered, **their foundation flowed away as a river**; *i.e.* their houses were undermined by the stream, which dissolved the foundations. The reference to the Deluge is admitted by nearly all commentators.

17. *for them*] The marginal rendering **to them** is correct. Job is represented as asking what doth the Almighty do to them? See notes on *vv.* 19 and 30 of the last chapter.

18. A quotation from Job's own speech (see reference), drawing out the arguments, as though Job had contrasted his own misery, as a pious and godly man, with the riches of the wicked.

19. Eliphaz contrasts all this train of argument with the feelings of men of true piety, who, as he characteristically assumes, confident in God's righteousness, look on all such temporary phenomena with cheerfulness, and laugh at the boastings of the wicked.

20. *Whereas our substance is not cut down*] Instead of "substance" render **opponents**; the meaning of this verse appears to be, **Of a truth our opponents are cut down, and fire devoureth their remains.** See Note below.

21—30. After these cruel and unsparing reproaches, Eliphaz, mindful of his own dig-

from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.

d chap. 8. 5.

23 [d] If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

1 Or, *on the dust.*

24 Then shalt thou lay up gold [1] as dust, and the *gold* of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.

25 Yea, the Almighty shall be thy [1] defence, and thou shalt have † plenty of silver.

1 Or, *gold.* † Heb. *silver of strength.*

26 For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.

27 Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.

28 Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.

29 When *men* are cast down, then thou shalt say, *There is* lifting up; and he shall save † the humble person.

† Heb. *him that hath low eyes.*

30 [1] He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

1 Or, *The innocent shall deliver the island.*

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nity, and duty, as Job's professed friend, and touched, it may be, by some compassion for his misery, exhorts him to a speedy repentance, which, he assures him, will be immediately rewarded by abundance of wealth. In this promise is found the true key to the man's character: it is essentially that which Satan attributes to Job, selfish and sordid, like that of Mammon in Milton: a character denoted, in all probability, by his significant name, "gold my god:" see note on ch. ii. 11.

21. *Acquaint now thyself*] Sc. be in communion, on terms of loving, or (as the word, the same as in *v.* 2, may denote), of *profitable* intercourse with God. The mixture of truth in this admonition scarcely justifies its frequent use by divines; there is a strong alloy of selfishness.

be at peace] Either "be at peace with Him," so it is generally understood; or "be safe, have peace as a result of such communion."

good] Not goodness, but good fortune, prosperity.

22. *the law*] Or, "instruction;" there is no reference to the Mosaic law, as the A. V. seems to imply. See Introd. § 5. Eliphaz claims to be himself the interpreter of God's law.

23. *thou shalt be built up*] The reading is probably correct; but the LXX. have, "if thou shalt be humbled," which Ewald prefers as continuing the same construction through the verse. Thus too Merx.

put away] Assuming (like Zophar, xi. 14) that Job's tents were filled with secret spoils.

24, 25. The inner heart of Eliphaz speaks with a grotesque naïveté: he lays it bare with a perfect unconsciousness of the exposure.

24. *lay up gold as dust*] Or, "and lay down treasure in the dust, and Ophir in the stones of the torrents." This rendering is generally preferred by commentators, but it is not certain; our A. V. is defensible, and gives a good sense. On Ophir, see xxviii. 16.

25. *defence*] Or, **treasures**; the same word as in the preceding verse.

plenty of silver] The original word is singularly emphatic, though vague; **silver of mighty efforts**, drawing out and rewarding all man's energies; contrast this with Job's words, ch. xxviii. 15—19. Delitzsch and Ewald, deriving the word from another root, would render it "most precious or excellent silver;" but the expression, which denotes great effort, is specially applicable to silver, of which, as Pictet observes, "il faut un travail considérable pour l'extraire et le purifier," so that its possession indicates a certain development of industry, and progress in civilization. See 'Origines indogermaniques,' Tom. I. p. 158; and notes on xxviii. 1.

27. *thou shalt pay thy vows*] An exhortation, which, though in itself unexceptionable, yet taken in connection with the context, implies an interchange of benefits: a man's righteousness is no profit to God, as Eliphaz says; but when he becomes great and wealthy he can pay his vows; his prosperity thus gives a stronger claim upon God's favour.

28. The promise of immediate success on all enterprises has a touch of audacity: restored to God's favour, Job will have but to speak; the thing is done; he will not go wrong or stumble, for there will be full light on his path: see Prov. iv. 18.

29—30. This promise sounds better; it presents a hope, which Job could appreciate, the power of giving help. God will save the humble when Job shall say, "lifting up;" *i.e.* when he consoles him with a promise. This should be regarded as an unconscious and therefore strong attestation to Job's character, which had evidently made a stronger impression upon Eliphaz than he was himself aware of: see ch. iv. 3, 4.

30. *the island of the innocent*] This rendering is now generally given up. It should be "the not-innocent," *i.e.* even those who are guilty. **He will deliver even the**

guilty; he shall be delivered by the pureness of thy hand. Eliphaz does not speak here without warrant; the highest privilege God vouchsafes to His servants is that of effectual intercession: His "servant Job" was to pray for his opponents, and to save them from the punishment due to their folly: see ch. xlii. 7, 8. Merx reads "for God (El, for i) delivers the innocents."

This speech, in fact, brings the whole argument on the side of Job's opponents to a close. Bildad has no more to add. Zophar is henceforth silent. The immediate effect upon Job's mind is that of utter weariness and prostration. In the following answer he can but repeat arguments which, though unanswered, have been rejected with scorn.

NOTES on CHAP. XXII. 2, 20.

2. Merx renders יסכן, endangers; in the 2nd clause he reads יסכנו on account of עלימו and takes משכיל to mean, "so saith the proverb." But the meaning "endanger" is improbable; the word occurs once only in that sense, Eccles. x. 9, where it is a denominative from שכין: see Ges. The second alteration obliterates one proof that מו may refer to an individual, as Ew. admits. The third conjecture is wholly inadmissible.

20. LXX. *ὑπόστασις αὐτῶν*, which Merx renders יְקָמָם, "their substance." He assumes a reference to the history of the Deluge, which, as he takes it to be a legend of late origin, supplies him with an argument for the date of the composition. But *fire* has nothing to do with the Deluge, and were the allusion admissible it would prove nothing against the date of this book.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *Job longeth to appear before God,* 6 *in confidence of his mercy.* 8 *God, who is invisible, observeth our ways.* 11 *Job's innocency.* 13 *God's decree is immutable.*

THEN Job answered and said,

2 Even to day *is* my complaint bitter: †my stroke is heavier than my groaning.

† Heb. *my hand.*

3 Oh that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come *even* to his seat!

4 I would order *my* cause before

CHAPS. XXIII, XXIV. In these two chapters Job answers Eliphaz, and exhausts the arguments which he had previously urged, xxiii. 2. He justifies his complaints by the severity of his affliction, and declares (3—7), that were he tried before God's tribunal, he would be justified by Him; but (6—9) God hides Himself, and will not manifest Himself, although (10—12) He knows Job's perfect innocence, uniform obedience, and loving estimation of His Word (13—16). This mystery Job attributes to God's will, and it fills him with trouble and terror; the least he might have expected would have been to die before the dark sorrow came upon him (xxiv. 1). But such, he affirms, appears to be the general course; they who know God cannot discern His judgments. On earth (2—12) cruelty and oppression drive the poor to despair, the desert and the city are alike full of misery, of groaning and wailing, but God regards not the disorder. Every kind of crime (13—24), murder, adultery, theft, is committed by the children of night, and they die, not by judicial sentence, but like other men, in mature age, and without any manifestation of God's wrath. This is the mystery which Job calls on his friends to explain. The whole speech is most painful, it indicates a bitter and maddened spirit; but, bearing in mind the real scope and object of Job's trials, we see that it still leaves the foundation untouched. Far from forsaking God, Job's great misery is that he cannot find Him; far from believing that the inexplicable indications of injustice prove that God in His essential attributes is unjust, Job is sure that when God does manifest Himself, the righteous cause must prosper; believing most fully that his righteousness here will have no recompense, nor save him from the most cruel afflictions, "he holds fast to his integrity," and finds, as heretofore, his only consolation in the consciousness that he has walked with God. He doubts not that God has His own appointed seasons and methods of judgment, though neither he nor his opponents can discern them. His despair is complete so far as regards this life, but it does not reach the centre of his being; he still offers the sublimest of all spectacles: not that of a good man struggling with adversity, but that of one who, though prostrated by it, and relinquishing all struggles as utterly useless, still cleaves to goodness and to God.

2. There is much difference of opinion as to the meaning of this verse; see Note below. Our version is quite literal, with the exception of the word "stroke" for "hand," as given in the margin: it may be understood to mean, "Even to day (after all that has been said) my complaint is (held by

him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

5 I would know the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

6 Will he plead against me with *his* great power? No; but he would put *strength* in me.

7 There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.

8 Behold, I go forward, but he *is* not *there;* and backward, but I cannot perceive him:

9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him:* he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see *him:*

10 But he knoweth † the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

11 My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; † I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than ‖ my necessary *food.*

13 But he *is* in one *mind*, and who can turn him? and *what* [a] his soul desireth, even *that* he doeth.

14 For he performeth *the thing that is* appointed for me: and many such *things are* with him.

15 Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

† Heb. *the way that is with me.*

† Heb. *I have hid.* or, *laid up.*

‖ Or, *my appointed portion.*

[a] Ps. 115. 3.

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my opponents to be) bitter," *i.e.* rebellious and inexcusable, "and yet the hand of God is heavier upon me than my groaning." We have thus the same plea which Job had urged in his first answer to Eliphaz, vi. 2. Or the meaning may be more simply, True, my complaint is very bitter, but it is justified by my affliction. The expression "even to-day" confirms the view of Ewald and others that the discussion continued several days.

3. *his seat*] *i.e.* judgment-seat, tribunal; see Ps. ix. 7, 8.

6. Cf. ix. 34, xiii. 21. Merx, however, omits the interrogative particle, and renders, though He, &c.

No: but he would put strength in me] Rather, **Nay, even He will not impute aught to me.** See Note below.

7. This passage is of great importance, proving that Job knows that when God manifests Himself the cause of righteousness is assured; there can be no unrighteousness with Him.

8, 9. The efforts of the soul to find Him whom it seeks were never described more truly or affectingly; such sorrow can only be felt by a spiritual mind: contrast this with the feelings described, xxi. 14, 15 and xxiv. 13, 17. It should be observed that Job's conviction of God's absolute Presence comes out most strongly when he feels that he cannot discern Him.

8. *forward*] In this and in the next verse the words forward, backward, left, and right hand, mean respectively to the east, west, north, and south. The orientals stood with their faces eastward in marking the cardinal points; a rational and beautiful custom, of which traces, associated with most sacred thoughts, still linger in the Church.

10. *the way that I take*] The marginal rendering is closer and more forcible; **the way that is with me**, *i.e.* which I habitually walk in. Thus Dillmann, who compares Ps. cxxxix. 24, and refers to Ew. 'Gram.' § 287, c.

when] This word is unnecessary, and should be omitted. God has tried Job, who knows that when the fiery trial is over he will come out of the furnace as pure gold. See James i. 12.

12. *esteemed*] Or, as in the margin, "hid," **laid up**, *i. e.* as a precious, inestimable treasure.

more than my necessary food] Rather, **my own law**, *i.e.* the law of my own mind, my own will; the will of the natural man: thus even while justifying his perfect innocence, in a tone which sounds like self-righteousness, Job recognizes the evangelical principle; see Rom. vii. 23. This meaning is accepted by most critics. See Note below.

13. *in one mind*] Or, "He is in one," *i.e.* "changes not." The word "mind" is not happily chosen. Job speaks not of the mind of God, which he knows to be with him, but of His dealings, which he feels to be against him: He persists in one course.

his soul desireth] A very harsh expression, but which implies that, in all which befals Job God carries out the purpose of His own inscrutable will. The contradiction between this and the deeper conviction, which identifies God with goodness, is but apparent

15. *at his presence*] The *unseen* Presence. Job longs for His manifested Presence.

16 For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me:

17 Because I was not cut off before the darkness, *neither* hath he covered the darkness from my face.

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16. *soft*] A beautiful and exact rendering of the Hebrew; soft in the sense of weak, crushed, as a bruised reed.

troubleth] The original word is very strong, filleth me with terror and confusion.

17. *before the darkness*] *i.e.* before these woes came upon me. The same complaint as in iii. 10.

covered the darkness] *i.e.* saved or preserved me from seeing this great sorrow. Thus Renan, who translates the verse, "Car il ne m'a pas enlevé avant les jours sombres, il ne m'a pas préservé des ténèbres." This rendering, however, is now disputed by critics, as unsuited to the context, a point open to reasonable question. Dillm. proposes, "For I am not silenced (giving myself up without conviction to your suppositions), because of the darkness (sc. of my misfortune, nor because of myself whom darkness hath covered)." The alteration appears unnecessary.

NOTES on CHAP. XXIII. 2, 6, and 12.

2. מרי, Targ. מריר. Jer. in amaritudine. Dillm. holds that the reading should be altered to מר, since מרי means perverseness, from מרה. A great number of scholars accept both the reading and the sense, bitterness. The LXX. ἐκ χειρὸς, points to a various reading, מידו, which is preferred by Ew. Thus Merx, who in the second clause reads ידו for ידי. The LXX. has χειρός μου, but the Coptic, which frequently preserves the true reading, has "his hand."

6. The latter clause is mistranslated. Job simply expresses a hope that God would attend to him. The phrase שׂים בי is peculiar, שׂים is generally followed by אל or על. It may perhaps signify close, sustained attention; thus Dillmann; Merx, He Himself will find nothing in me.

12. The LXX. ἐν κόλπῳ μου, and Vulg. in sinu meo, must have read בחקי, which Merx adopts. The meaning would be "I have kept the words of His mouth in my bosom." The alteration is admissible, ב and מ being often interchanged: but the sense is not so forcible or appropriate as that of the Masoretic text, as explained in the foot-note. Bp. W. defends the A.V. Were his objection to the use of חוק, as applied to the law of the natural man, a valid one, the reading of the LXX. would be far preferable.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *Wickedness goeth often unpunished.* 17 *There is a secret judgment for the wicked.*

WHY, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?

2 *Some* remove the [a]landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and [1]feed *thereof*.

3 They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

[a] Deut. 19. 14. & 27. 17.

[1] Or, *feed* them.

CHAP. XXIV. **1.** The rendering of the A.V. may be defended (as by Rüetschi ap. Dillm.), with a slight change of punctuation, "do they, that know Him, not see His days." It is more probable, however, that the correct translation may be, "Why are not times appointed by the Almighty, and (why) do they, who know Him, not see His ways?" By "times" are meant determinate seasons, which the Almighty appoints for the execution of justice, more especially for the chastisement of offenders. The expression, "days of the Lord," invariably means the occasions on which God manifests Himself in righteousness: such days are His, because they are days of righteousness. Cf. Isai. ii. 12; xiii. 6; Joel i. 15; Amos v. 18. The two expressions therefore are not exactly synonymous; the former points to the vindication of God's righteousness by the punishment of sinners, the latter, by the restoration of the righteous.

2—4. These verses describe, generally, the results of an apparent withholding, or delay of judgment; as in Ecclesiastes viii. 11, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

2. *Some*] The LXX. supply "the wicked," which Merx adopts.

and feed thereof] Or, as in marg., **and feed them**; treating them openly as their own property, without fear of justice. LXX. "Together with their shepherd;" a probable reading, involving only a change in the vowel-points.

4 They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together.

5 Behold, *as* wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a prey: the wilderness *yieldeth* food for them *and* for *their* children.

6 They reap *every one* his †corn in the field: and †they gather the vintage of the wicked.

† Heb. *mingled corn*, or, *dredge*.
† Heb. *the wicked gather the vintage*.

7 They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that *they have* no covering in the cold.

8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter.

9 They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.

10 They cause *him* to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf *from* the hungry;

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4. *They turn the needy out of the way*] Either, "make them turn out of the road to which all have equal right," or, "compel them to seek by-ways, in order to escape from their violence;" cf. Judg. v. 6. The latter sense agrees better with the following clause; the poor, or the afflicted (according to the Keri), are forced altogether to hide themselves. Cf. Prov. xxviii. 28.

5—9. These verses describe the condition of the wretched driven out from their abodes by oppression. We have thus before us a graphic portraiture of savage hordes, who, when displaced by a more civilized and powerful race, prowl in the desert, at once desperate and pitiless. It is evident that the writer describes occurrences of his own time and country. Many traits might be applicable to Palestine, which in all ages has been liable to the incursions of Bedouins; and, at the time of the patriarchs, appears to have been frequently overrun by the savages, called Shasous in Egyptian documents of great antiquity; see Essay on Egyptian H. in Vol. I. p. 464. It is probable that Job had before him a race, like the Horites, driven out by the Idumeans, or Edomites, and reduced to a state of barbarism. M. de Gobineau uses this passage to illustrate the condition of the barbarous tribes, partly subdued and partly expelled from their homes by the Aryans; the following traits, drawn chiefly from the Avesta, certainly bear a close resemblance to the words of Job: "Le Dyw est querelleur, malveillant, menteur, pauvre, malsain, paresseux à l'excès, féroce comme les animaux des bois, sinon plus. Parce qu'il ne fait rien, il ne possède rien. S'il prend quelque chose, il le détruit. Il n'a ni champs ni maisons. Il est vaguant dans les montagnes, cherchant à assouvir sa faim ou à mal faire." 'Histoire des Perses,' I. p. 18.

5. *wild asses*] The onager, see note on ch. vi. 5, an animal remarkable for speed and untameable wildness, a description which applies to robber-hordes, rather than to mere vagabonds.

their work] *i.e.* robbery, their only occupation: if they rise early it is simply to look out for a prey, or booty.

yieldeth food] Rather, **is food**: the wilderness, which yields no fruits to industry, is food to him for his children; he supports them by the only occupation there practised, sc. by plunder.

6. *They reap*, &c.] Or, **in the tilled land they gather their fodder.** "Corn" is out of the question; the word means "fodder," as in ch. vi. 5; in order to procure it they make incursions into the field, *i.e.* the cultivated district. Instead of *fodder* (belil) Merx reads *by night*, belayil: a probable conjecture, but unnecessary.

gather] **glean.** When the vintage is over they glean the vineyards. Wetzstein notices that in the dialect of the Hauran the word here used means "come late," *i.e.* as Merx understands the clause, "They glean in the vineyards by night." The word "wicked" may imply that only wicked men allow prowlers even to glean their vineyards, or, more probably, that such vagabonds plunder the vineyards of men notorious for evil lives, and therefore not likely to be protected by their neighbours; or, the meaning may be, "of their oppressors."

7. They pass the night naked, without clothing. The description of the prowler is thus continued. Wetzstein observes, "All Bedouins sleep naked at night: when asked why they do this, since at night they are often attacked by enemies, they answer, that it is an old custom. Many perish in cold seasons."

9—11. These verses describe the villain of civilized life.

9. *They pluck*, &c.] The usurer seizes the children of his debtor even at the mother's breast; see Note on vi. 27.

take a pledge of the poor] The meaning appears to be, "they take from the poor all that he has for a pledge." This, as has been previously shewn, was contrary to the Mosaic law, and probably refers to the wilder and fiercer habits of early times.

10. They go about naked, without clothing, and bear the sheaf hungry. The verse describes the wretchedness of the victims of such oppression; they are deprived

11 *Which* make oil within their walls, *and* tread *their* winepresses, and suffer thirst.

12 Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly *to them*.

13 They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

14 The murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.

15 The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and †disguiseth *his* face.

† Heb. *setteth his face in secret.*

16 In the dark they dig through houses, *which* they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they know not the light.

17 For the morning *is* to them even as the shadow of death: if *one* know *them*, *they are in* the terrors of the shadow of death.

18 He *is* swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he be-

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of all clothing, which has been taken by the creditor, and are compelled to gather in his harvest without wages or food.

11. **Within their walls they press oil, wine-presses tread they and thirst.** Within their walls, on the premises of their oppressors, who witness their misery, and will not permit them even to still their thirst. Contrast with this treatment, which the writer had undoubtedly observed, with the injunctions of Moses, Deut. xxiv. 14, 15 and xxv. 4.

12. **Out of the city men groan, and the soul of the wounded crieth, yet Eloah regardeth not the folly.** Thus it is not merely in remote districts, or even in the factories of oppressors and slaveholders, but in the midst of the city, in the sight of the citizens, that men are reduced to the extremity of misery; and yet, so far as pious men can see (cf. *v.* 1), God doth not regard the strange and unintelligible course of events. The word "folly" is chosen with reference to the subversion of all intelligible principles of government. On the construction see Dillmann, and cf. Ps. l. 23, Hebrew.

13—17. These verses go farther still; they describe a class of still more desperate offenders: the oppressors and usurers previously described had a semblance of right, and may have kept within the limits of hard law, as yet unmitigated by the Mosaic code; those who now come before us sin against light.

13. *They are of those that rebel*, &c.] Or, **Others** (however) **are of those who rebel against light, they do not acknowledge its ways, and abide not in its paths**: the words imply antagonism and wilful ignorance, they *ignore* its ways.

14. *with the light*] Lit. "for the light;" *i.e.* not *at*, but *before* daybreak, when other men are yet sleeping; thus, in the next clause, and in the night is as a thief. This implies that the villain so described is a citizen, not known as a thief.

15. *the twilight*] Or, **gloom**; "twilight" gives an incorrect impression. As the thief chooses the dark hour before dawn, so the adulterer waits for the deep gloom of eventide.

disguiseth his face] Either with a mask, which is not probable, since masks for the purpose of concealment do not seem to have been used in the east; or with a thick veil, which in the Hauran is still called sitr (the word here used by Job). Since such a veil was worn only by women it seems likely that the adulterer concealed himself by putting on female attire. It is now customary in Syria, when men go out in the evening, to cover themselves from head to foot with the *tzar;* and, putting on the "*mandil*," or woman's veil, they take a lantern in their hands and go into a neighbour's house without hindrance from the watchmen, who would otherwise arrest them. Thus Wetzstein.

16. *In the dark*, &c.] The subject changes, the housebreaker is now described: render therefore, **In darkness they break through houses, by day they fasten themselves in, they know not light.** The second clause is seriously misrepresented in the A. V. The villain of Job finds in darkness his only friend, by day he shuts himself in his house; he will have nothing to do with the light. The custom of breaking through the walls of houses built of clay, or bricks dried in the sun, is well known; hence the Greek τοιχώρυχος for burglar.

17. **For to them morning is altogether darkness, for each of them knows the terrors of darkness.** The meaning of the first clause is clear: light is to them darkness; they naturally shrink from it; it brings destruction to them: the second clause may probably (Dillm.) mean, for every one of them is familiar with what to other men are the terrors of darkness, in them they find accomplices and friends; "knows" is taken here, as elsewhere, in the sense of friendly recognition.

holdeth not the way of the vineyards.

19 Drought and heat † consume the snow waters: *so doth* the grave *those which* have sinned.

† Heb. *violently take.*

20 The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall be broken as a tree.

21 He evil entreateth the barren *that* beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow.

22 He draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, ‖ and no *man* is sure of life.

‖ Or, *he trusteth not his own life.*

23 *Though* it be given him *to be* in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his eyes *are* upon their ways.

24 They are exalted for a little while, but † are gone and brought low; they are † taken out of the way as all *other*, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

† Heb. *are not.* † Heb. *closed up.*

25 And if *it be* not *so* now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?

18—20. These verses contain one answer to the question, what is the destiny of the enemy of light? The general meaning is disputed. Formerly the description was regarded as an imprecation, "may their portion be accursed, &c.;" thus the LXX., Vulg.: but there is no indication of this in the Hebrew: it is clear that Job gives a direct answer; he describes in his own words the actual condition and fate of the reprobate, whether ironically, adopting the views of his opponents, as some hold, or more probably, with the intention of shewing that, although they perish, there are no unmistakeable proofs that their death has a judicial character.

18. The verse is obscure; it may be rendered, **Light is he on the face of the waters; cursed is their property in the land; he returns no more to the vineyard.** The destruction is admitted: the criminal perishes suddenly, disappears like a bubble on the water: but there is no note of previous suffering, open shame, or judicial sentence. This would seem to refer to criminals who escape the lame and slowpaced justice (pede pœna claudo) of man. It is true that men curse their portion: when the criminal is gone it may be true, as Zophar asserted, that the place where he dwelt is execrated, but he is not there to feel it; he goes no more to his vineyard, and knows nought of the disgrace which attaches to his name. This explanation seems preferable to the only other one which can be reconciled with the Hebrew, accepting the literal sense, but understanding Job's statement to be ironical.

19, 20. Both verses describe the common fate of men, on the supposition that the grave is the last end. Suddenly and completely, as snow in burning heat, the criminal is lost to human sight in the grave: he is broken as a tree, cut off it may be by sudden death, but all is then over: he has no more to fear.

21. Turning from the common malefactor, Job now puts the man of high rank before us; far from doing justice to the defenceless, the childless and the widow, like the unjust judge in the parable, he scoffs at their entreaties; his one object is to raise men of might to power, to surround himself with strong and unscrupulous partisans.

22. Or, **He riseth up, though he despaired of life.** When a ruffian has given up all hope of life, convicted by conscience and evidence, he riseth up, *i.e.* he is delivered from judgment by his patron. See Note below.

23. This verse describes the lasting good fortune of the malefactor when he has once escaped from judgment. Our version obscures the sense. The Hebrew runs thus, **He** (*i.e.* God) **granteth him to be in security, and he is supported: His eyes are over their ways.**

24. They are exalted, after a little they are gone, they are brought low, like all mankind they are gathered, and like the tops of the ears of corn they are cut off. Job thus declares, in direct opposition to the other speakers, that so far from living in terror, the evil-doer is in perfect security, instead of being overthrown he is supported; he is an object of special providential care; he rises to eminence, and when, like all men, he dies, it is by a sudden or painless death, preceded by no lingering disease, and not until he has reached his full term of life, like corn ripe for the harvest. In all this wild and fearful exaggeration there is an underground of substantial facts. It would have been easy to prove that such is not the general result of an evil life; but nothing short of a clear proof that no innocent man is ever overwhelmed by misfortune, and no guilty man ever escapes it, would overthrow Job's position. The mystery is unsolved; Job does not doubt that God has a solution; he is sure that his opponents have not. "Who," he concludes, "will prove the falsehood of this statement, and invalidate my argument?" With this last outburst the storm passes by.

NOTE on CHAP. XXIV. 22.

The form of the word חיין (life) is held to denote a late age: but the Moabitic stone has lately proved, somewhat to the surprise of scholars, that the termination of the plural in *an* is very ancient: see Dr Ginsburg, 'The Moabite Stone.' "A very remarkable feature in so early a document is the form of the plural masculine ן instead of ם both in the nouns and numerals." Introduction, p. 27.

CHAPTER XXV.

Bildad sheweth that man cannot be justified before God.

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 Dominion and fear *are* with him, he maketh peace in his high places.

3 Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?

4 [a] How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean *that is* born of a woman?

5 Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.

6 How much less man, *that is* [b] a worm? and the son of man, *which is* a worm?

[a] chap. 4. 17, &c. & 15. 14, &c.

[b] Psal. 22. 6.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *Job, reproving the uncharitable spirit of Bildad,* 5 *acknowledgeth the power of God to be infinite and unsearchable.*

BUT Job answered and said,

2 How hast thou helped *him that is* without power? *how* savest thou the arm *that hath* no strength?

CHAP. XXV. This short speech of Bildad shews the complete exhaustion of Job's opponents. The speaker leaves unnoticed the question raised by Job, and simply repeats two common places, which had been advanced in the beginning of the controversy by Eliphaz; but, so far from being disputed by Job, had been repeatedly urged and illustrated by him. God is omnipotent; hence follows the duty of unreserved submission, an inference which Bildad leaves to be drawn by the hearer; man is naturally unclean; how then can he be justified by Him who discerns impurity in the very heavens?

2. *his high places*] All possible contentions between the inhabitants of heaven are subdued by God's power: the inference suggested is, how then can He permit man to contend with Him? This, and the following verse, refer to a primeval revelation of a conflict between the angels, and of the expulsion of the enemies of peace: cf. xxi. 22, so also Isa. xxiv. 21. High places = heaven; see xvi. 19.

3. *his armies*] His "angels that do His will;" and all the physical and spiritual powers of the universe: see ch. xxxviii. 19—37; Ps. ciii. 21, civ. 4. Hence the great name Jehovah of Sabaoth. See note on 1 Sam. i. 11.

doth not his light arise] This expression has been variously interpreted: the meaning appears to be, His light shineth over all, above all, so that the brightest children of light are but dark in comparison; their light is but a dim reflection of His, and is lost in His effulgence: Ew., Del.

5. Cf. ch. xv. 15.

The tone of Bildad's speech, though feeble, and without an attempt to grapple with the real difficulties of the question, is pleasing in tone, free from Zophar's violence, and from the worldliness of Eliphaz. He does not repeat the old charges and insinuations against Job, but admonishes him to submission on grounds, which are not calculated to cause any personal irritation, and which Job himself would be first to admit. He brings the discussion, so far as his party is concerned, to a close.

CHAP. XXVI. With this chapter begins the magnificent series of discourses, in which Job reviews, and sums up the whole controversy. He adopts all that is substantially true in the arguments of his opponents, and recedes from a position, which, though tenable against them, does not accord with his own principles, or truly represent the results of his own experience. After a few words of well deserved, but not bitter rebuke (1—4), he enlarges upon the first great truth which has been often stated, but neither on their side, nor on his, without some admixture of error, or of rebellious feeling, the truth of God's almightiness and omniscience; and concludes a description, crowded with sublime imagery, by a declaration that all that can be conceived, or received by man, is but a faint echo of the voice, which, if uttered, would overwhelm the spirit of man. In ch. xxvii. 5—14, he deals with the other points, so to speak, the anthropology of the discussion. His integrity is a fact, which his very piety to God forbids his surrendering. He could not make such confession, as hath been required of him, without deceit; whatever be-

3 How hast thou counselled *him that hath* no wisdom? and *how* hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

4 To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?

5 Dead *things* are formed from under the waters, [1]and the inhabitants thereof.

[1] Or, *with the inhabitants.*

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tide, he holds fast his righteousness (1—6). Such deceit belongs to the opponents of the right cause; it would constitute him a hypocrite, and deprive him of his hope; a man capable of that could not expect to be heard, would not, and could not, love or call upon God, as Job himself had never ceased to do (8—10). He then declares fully and plainly what he really believes touching the principles of God's providential government; and recalls, in fact directly repudiates, the argument, which he had previously urged, both as a real matter of trouble and perplexity to himself, and as a conclusive answer to his opponent's charges. He does not even now assert that the righteous man will necessarily be prosperous, a statement which he could not reconcile with the facts of his own experience; but he states that the real portion of the wicked, that which, whether known or unknown, is reserved for one and all as their heritage, is final and complete extermination; his children will be cut off, his wealth be the sport of the innocent, his house overthrown, his life filled with incessant terrors and ended by a storm, his memory accursed (13—22). This explicit recantation of arguments, upon which Job had laid so much stress, and more especially in the two preceding discourses, has caused much perplexity to commentators. Some have supposed that it belongs to a lost speech of Zophar; but the silence of that speaker is satisfactorily accounted for, and the reader has been prepared for it by Bildad's abandonment of all further argument: and vigorously as Job had maintained the proposition, which he here recalls, it is evident throughout, that the conviction of God's righteousness lay far deeper; the current of thought, which carried him away, was but superficial, and yields to the mighty tide of feeling, when the depths of his heart are brought into motion. He was naturally unwilling to leave the question, which he here disposes of, on so unsatisfactory a footing. Job, doubtless, shared the universal conviction that, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, which are quite sufficient to put a stop to uncharitable judgments, and applications to individual cases, God judges the wicked even in this life, and, sooner or later, awards to each his portion. In the next chapter, xxviii., he turns to the great principle, which, once thoroughly accepted, shews the futility of all speculations touching apparent difficulties or inequalities in God's government. Man has marvellous faculties; in the investigation of physical phenomena, in his mastery over external nature, his powers are indefinite, his tact sure, his achievements a matter of rational admiration; but as for wisdom, as for understanding, which can penetrate God's secrets, and comprehend His ways, man knoweth it not, it is not found in the place of the living. Wisdom, in that sense, belongs to God, it is His alone; all the wisdom and understanding of man is summed up in the fear of God, and in the hatred of sin. With this declaration Job disposes of the whole argument; he does not profess to account for his own sufferings, or for any inexplicable events in the world's history; such attempts do but savour of presumption, their failure causes inconceivable scandal; one thing is sure, that he who fears God, and departs from evil, hath the true secret of life and eternity. In the three following chapters Job takes a review of his whole life, as though he would settle the question of his innocence once and for ever: the conclusion is, that he holds fast to his integrity, but remains in a state of absolute perplexity touching the cause of his terrible sufferings, which he describes in the 30th chapter.

2. *without power*] There is a mixture of irony and expostulation in these words; far less bitter than xvi. and xxi., but more effective. The rendering is correct, and supported by Rosen., Dillm., and other critics. The ancient versions give less satisfactory explanations. The Syr., Targ., and Arab., "how hast thou answered without strength?" The LXX., *πότερον οὐχ ᾧ πολλὴ ἰσχύς*, take לא in the sense לו; see note on xiii. 15.

3. *the thing as it is*] Or, **sound sense.** The single word so rendered is common in the Proverbs: it means that which is real, stedfast, substantial (see note on ch. v. 12), the precise opposite of vague common-place declamation, such as that in Bildad's speech: the word "plentifully" or "abundantly" may refer to the meagreness and shortness of that speech.

4. *To whom*] The question implies, surely not to Job, since the words have no bearing whatever upon his arguments.

whose spirit] As though Bildad had derived his inspiration from Eliphaz, or common tradition, not from God, not the spirit of wisdom and understanding.

5. Job pauses: he turns himself away altogether from man, and goes to the source at

[a] Prov. 15. 11.

6 [a] Hell *is* naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

7 He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing.

8 He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

9 He holdeth back the face of his throne, *and* spreadeth his cloud upon it.

10 He hath compassed the waters with bounds, † until the day and night come to an end.

† Heb. *until the end of light with darkness.*

11 The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof.

12 He divideth the sea with his

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once; he will not derive his own inspiration save from God.

Dead things, &c.] Or, "the dead are convulsed—under the waters and the inhabiters thereof." Bildad had spoken of God's dominion in heaven, Job shews that it reaches the dead; the Hebrew word is Rephaim, the name of an extinct race of giants, but here, and elsewhere, applied to the shades of the departed. The dead sleep, their shadowy forms rest in Sheol, under the ocean; but God's will reaches them, rouses them in torture from their death-stillness, below the depths of ocean peopled by monster forms. This statement coincides with many vague allusions to the condition of the disembodied spirit, and it has a most fitting place in Job's discourse. His witness is on high, but his power reaches the very abodes of darkness, and restores consciousness to the very shades of the departed. The A. V. "are formed" rests upon a different, and in itself a defensible interpretation. The Hebrew may mean "are born," or are transfixed with the pangs as of child-birth. The LXX. have μαιωθήσονται, the Vulg. "gemunt." See Note below.

6. *destruction*] In Hebrew Abaddon, the abyss of the bottomless pit; the abode of destruction: no mere abstraction, or negation, but a region impenetrable save to God's eye. Thus ch. xxviii. 22, xxxi. 12; Prov. xv. 11; Ps. lxxxviii. 11.

7. *the north*] By the north we are probably to understand the firmament, extending, as the ancient Semites conceived, from the northern point indicated by the polar star, over the apparently empty space of our atmosphere. (Thus most critics, *e.g.* Ges., Ros., Umb., Del.). The words employed here and in other passages of Holy Scripture do not convey the impression of substance or of metallic solidity, as is frequently asserted, but simply of expansion; they are vague, indefinite, just what they ought to be to express the impressions made upon an observant mind, careful not to substitute speculations for facts. Dillmann takes "the north" to mean the great mountain-range.

upon nothing] The Hebrew word occurs here only; the sense, "nothingness," is undisputed. It presents a singularly strong protest against superstitions prevalent among all heathens, and also against the misrepresentations of some modern critics. Job knows nothing of solid foundations on which the broad expanse of earth is supported. How Job knew the truth, demonstrated by astronomy, that the earth hangs self-poised in empty space, is a question not easily solved by those who deny the inspiration of Holy Scripture. Dillmann observes that this representation is peculiar to the book of Job: it certainly does not belong to the speculations of a later age, in which no trace of it is to be found. Bishop Wordsworth quotes very important passages from Kepler, and Lord Bacon, 'Advancement of Learning:' recognizing the deep insight of the author of this book "which if it be revolved with reverence, will be found pregnant and swelling with natural philosophy."

8. *in his thick clouds*] There is no reason to believe that Job regarded the clouds as water-bags: he uses only the same terms which a naturalist would use, speaking the language, not only of poetry, but of common life. The expression is figurative, of course, but means no more to us, and probably meant no more to Job, than that the fall of rain is determined by laws, which he refers to the will and direct agency of God.

9, 10. Or, *he holdeth*] These two verses may be rendered,

He covers the face of His Throne,
He expands His cloud over it;
He compasseth the waters with a line,
To the confine of light and darkness.

They seem to describe the gathering together of thick clouds before a heavy thunderstorm. God covers the vault of heaven (above which is the invisible abode of His Majesty, but through which somewhat of His light and glory shine) with dense clouds, which He compasseth, *i.e.* extends in a continually expanding circle until it reaches the horizon which marks the exact limits of light and darkness.

11. The breaking of the storm follows, when the mountain-heights, on which the welkin rests, tremble, and are astonished at His rebuke. To the poet's ear the prolonged echoes of the thunder are the voices of the mountains expressing their consternation at the rebuke of God.

12. The effects of the storm on the sea.

He divideth] Or, **agitates**, stirs up, He causes the upheaving of the stormy **waves:**

power, and by his understanding he smiteth through †the proud.

† Heb. *pride.*

13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

14 Lo, these *are* parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

Dill. takes the words, "He makes the sea tremble," in the sense, "He reduces it to submission," "componit fluctus;" but the explanation here given seems preferable; cf. Isa. li. 15; Jer. xxxi. 35, where the same word, undoubtedly, has the meaning, "causes to tremble." Thus Schult., Del., Merx.

the proud] The original word is Rahab: see ch. ix. 13. Here it evidently means the power of evil represented by the monsters of the deep, huge saurian forms destroyed in some age of cosmic convulsion, presenting to the imagination a lively and terrible type of the agencies of destruction and disorder.

13. *By his spirit*] Or, **By His breath the heavens are bright**, lit. *brightness.* The calm succeeds the storm, when it has done its work. God's breath, the clear bright wind which disperses the clouds, restores the beauty and glory of heaven. The latter clause of this verse should be rendered, **hath wounded the flying dragon.** This is supposed by some commentators (Renan) to mean one of the constellations; but far more probably, like the Egyptian Apophis, it is an emblem or personification of darkness and evil: see note above, ch. iii. 8. When God disperses darkness He is said to wound the enemy who flees before Him. The expression is common in the New Testament, but is there applied exclusively to spiritual realities. The LXX. render this passage, "He slew the apostate dragon," shewing the sense of the ancient Hebrew Church," as Bishop Wordsworth observes in a note full of interesting quotations.

14. "Parts," or "ends," *i.e.* the mere **outskirts** of His ways; "portion" or **whisper.** How grand and terrible is that mere whisper, faint mutterings of His word, which we hear; what then must be the full thunder?

NOTE on CHAP. XXVI. 5.

Merx renders the second clause, "whose dwellings are under the waters:" מִשְּׁכֵנֵיהֶם, for שְׁכֵנֵיהֶם, but without authority.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Job protesteth his sincerity.* 8 *The hypocrite is without hope.* 11 *The blessings which the wicked have are turned into curses.*

MOREOVER Job †continued his parable, and said,

† Heb. *added to take up.*

2 *As* God liveth, *who* hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, *who* hath †vexed my soul;

† Heb. *made my soul bitter*

3 All the while my breath *is* in me, and ‖the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils;

‖ That is, *the breath which God gave him*

4 My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

CHAP. XXVII. In this chapter Job proceeds to deal with the other questions, which regard his own integrity and God's dealings with man.

1. *parable*] The word comprehends all discourses in which the results of discursive thought are concisely or figuratively expressed. In this discourse Job deals with general truths and their practical application.

2. *As God liveth*] Hitherto Job has used no oath, now for the first time he swears by the living God, his "witness" and "redeemer." This oath expresses his faith and also his conviction that his judgment is not as yet complete; "God hath taken it away" is an expression carefully chosen to imply "withholding" not "perversion." Job thus, as throughout this discourse, corrects his former assertions; he holds fast the conviction that his afflictions are not a punishment due for his offences, but he no longer charges God with injustice: even for that expression which he still uses, modified as it is, he suggests an excuse in the pardonable bitterness of a soul filled with anguish. Cf. Ruth iii. 13; Judg. viii. 19, &c.

3. *All the while*] Or, **For whole even now is my breath in me**: (thus Dillm. and Hirz.). This verse is parenthetical; it asserts that notwithstanding his anguish, which approaches to madness, his breath, the living principle, even that which God "breathed into his nostrils, and made him a living soul," is sound, capable of knowing and holding what is true and right. Merx "So long as my breath is in me;" but A.V. is preferable.

4. *wickedness...deceit*] Such as would be a feigned contrition and confession of guilt, of which Job knew himself to be clear.

5 God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.

6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach *me* [†]so long as I live.

[†] Heb. *from my days.*

7 Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.

8 [a]For what *is* the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?

[a] Matt. 16. 26.

9 [b]Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?

[b] Prov. 1. 28. Ezek. 8. 18. John 9. 31. Jam. 4. 3.

10 Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?

11 I will teach you [‖]by the hand of God: *that* which *is* with the Almighty will I not conceal.

[‖] Or, *being in the hand*, &c.

12 Behold, all ye yourselves have seen *it;* why then are ye thus altogether vain?

13 This *is* the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of

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5. *justify you*] *i.e.* admit you to be in the right. We should remark the force with which Job dwells on the main point; his words might be mistaken for self-righteousness, but they are justified by God's own declaration, ch. ii. 3.

6. *my heart*, &c.] Lit. **My heart doth not reproach one of my days**, conscience cannot fix upon any season of his life in which he had committed crimes meriting such chastisement. Thus even St Paul (1 Cor. iv. 4), "I know nothing by myself," *i.e.* "I am not conscious of any wilful guilt." The Apostle may seem to refer to the LXX. version of this passage, οὐ γὰρ σύνοιδα ἐμαυτῷ ἄτοπα πράξας. See also Acts xxiii. 1. Job would now have willingly accepted the apostle's declaration, "yet am I not hereby justified, He that judgeth me is the Lord;" for all that Job really desired was to be judged.

7. *Let mine enemy be as the wicked*] This sounds like an imprecation, but Job means that such wickedness as false representation of his feelings and convictions can never be committed by him; if imputed at all, it must be to them who counsel him to an act of hypocrisy.

8. *though he hath gained*] The Hebrew word is used of wrongful gain. After all, such hypocrisy would be futile as it is wicked; it might answer for a season, as, for instance, in changing men's feelings towards him; but the question is, what will be the hope, the gain, when God takes the soul. This is perhaps one of the strongest passages which can be adduced to prove Job's instinctive and ineradicable faith in the immortality of the living principle. If that were annihilated, or eternally unconscious, what question could there be about hope?

9. *Will God hear*] Job therefore felt that God *did* hear his cry, though he could get no answer.

10. *Will he delight*] Job therefore delighted in the Almighty his punisher. "Always call," he would therefore pray without ceasing: note the extreme beauty and delicacy of the term by which Job thus unconsciously, as it would seem, bears witness to his own inward faith, hope and piety.

11. *I will teach you*] **concerning the acts of God**: lit. the hand of God. This verse is of great importance. It implies that Job is now going to state exactly what he believes touching the hand of God, *i.e.* the true character of the divine dispensation. He will not conceal what is with the Almighty (see note on x. 13), the principle which, he is assured, must be present to the mind of God. This prepares us, if not for a recantation, yet for a modification of statements which had been wrung from him, when his words flowed over from a spirit drunk with the poison of God's arrows; see vi. 4. This explanation agrees with Dillmann's, who shews that it is in harmony with the fundamental principles of Job. See also Bishop Wordsworth.

12. *have seen it*] They, like him, knew the facts, which he is now about to state, but they misapplied them altogether when, having no cause whatever to suspect Job's integrity, they represented his sufferings as proofs of guilt. Given two facts, God's wrath against sin, and Job's piety, proved by a life of consistent godliness, the only inference, which they ought to have drawn from the aspect of his misery, was that God's judgments are unsearchable, and that sooner or later his "righteous servant" would be justified.

13. *This*] *This* refers to the following statement. Job now accepts and repeats those assertions of his opponents (cf. xx. 29) in which he recognizes a certain, though partial truth. "Portion," "heritage," that which strictly belongs to him, wages due to him, and the lasting inheritance to be handed down to his children. In the statements which appear to contradict this principle, and which require the rectification which Job now gives, he had represented the frequent combination of prosperity with injustice as a fact of experience, not as based upon a law or principle; so long as the combination lasts the wicked have not their portion, nor have the oppressors received their heritage: he now adds his settled

oppressors, *which* they shall receive of the Almighty.

14 If his children be multiplied, *it is* for the sword: and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.

15 Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and [c] his widows shall not weep.

16 Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay;

17 He may prepare *it*, but the just shall put *it* on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.

18 He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth *that* the keeper maketh.

19 The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he *is* not.

20 [d] Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night.

21 The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place.

22 For *God* shall cast upon him, and not spare: † he would fain flee out of his hand.

23 *Men* shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.

[c] Ps. 78. 64.

[d] chap. 18. 11.

† Heb. *in fleeing he would flee.*

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conviction, that have it they must and will. That this was not so much a change, as a clearing up, of inward conviction, may be inferred from those very passages to which it seems opposed. What he then complained of was, not that God had no days of retribution, but that His people could not see them (xxiv. 1), and the terms in which he repudiates the counsel of the wicked (xxi. 16) proves a consciousness that all the appearances, on which they relied, and of which he can give no account, must, after all, be fallacious. This explanation may not quite remove the difficulty (it is in fact generally difficult for us to follow the abrupt and subtle movements of the oriental, more especially of the Semitic mind), but it appears to be the true one, and of great importance for the interpretation of the whole book.

14. Job had previously stated that the wicked have numerous offspring, prosperous during their own life (c. xxi. 8), he now points out that after all they are "for the sword;" inheriting their parents' wealth, they inherit its liabilities, falling by the sword of their enemies, or reduced to poverty by judicial sentence. Job thus accepts even Zophar's statement, xx. 10.

15. *buried in death*] Or "by Death," a personification; Death will be their only apparitor, no friends, no consolers, no widow will stand by the plague-smitten inheritor of the curse, Death only with his ravenous and unclean ministers, the vulture, the jackal, the hyena, will entomb the corpse. Merx and Olshausen insert "not"—shall not be buried: contrary to the Old Versions.

16. *raiment*] In which the wealth of the ancients consisted to a great extent: cf. Matt. vi. 19; James v. 2.

18. Both figures in this verse represent at once the rapidity and apparent ease with which the fortunes of a bad man are built up, and the still greater ease with which they are overthrown. See Note below.

a booth] The light, moveable tent, set up for watchers in vineyards or fruit-gardens; Isa. i. 8.

19. *shall not be gathered*] An obscure phrase in the original, and variously rendered. The most probable reading seems to be, "He lieth down rich, but it (his wealth) shall not be gathered," *i.e.* before the harvest is gathered in he will perish. (The LXX. have οὐ προσθήσει, from which a various reading in the Hebrew is probably inferred (יוסיף for יאסף), "he will do it no more." Thus Ital., Syr., Arab., and several modern critics; *e.g.* Ew., Hirz., Dillm.; Renan, "mais c'est pour la dernière fois.")

he is not] No sooner awake than he is slain. This verse seems to describe the rich tyrant, surprised in his fastness, and waking only to see his murderers; cf. 2 K. xix. 35, and ch. xxiv. 24.

20. *as waters*] *i.e.* like a flood: cf. xx. 28. In selecting these special instances of visitation Job may have referred to well-known events, such *e.g.* as the Deluge, or the destruction of the cities of the plain; (see, however, Note below); but the one point which he has at heart is to vindicate himself from misrepresentation. It should be remarked that, great as his own calamities had been, they had been different in kind from those which he describes; his children had perished, but not by the sword of avengers, or by famine; his wealth had not been transferred, like that of a robber, to the just and innocent; he had been cast down in his place, but not hurled out of it; above all, instead of seeking to flee from God's hand, all that he longed for was to be visited by Him in judgment, and, far from expecting that lasting infamy would attach to his memory, he looked for a vindication of his righteousness in the sight of men.

NOTES on CHAP. XXVII. 18, and 20—23.

v. 18. For כָּעָשׁ, as a moth, Merx reads כעכביש, as a spider. LXX. ὥσπερ σῆτες καὶ ὥσπερ ἀράχνη: Syr. "as a spider." The reading is very probable: the middle letters may have fallen out: and the figure is at once true and apposite, see ch. viii. 14.

vv. 20—23. Merx renders these verses thus:

By day will terror seize him,
By night a tempest stealeth him away,
A blast carrieth him away so that he departeth,
And it terrifies him out of his place.
And it falls upon him unsparingly,
He flees before it in swift flight.
The people clap their hands at him,
And hiss at him out of his place.

This requires two changes. *v.* 20, for כמים Merx reads ביום, *against* LXX. ὥσπερ ὕδωρ, and the Syr. which continues the construction in the next verse. *v.* 22. For וְיַשְׁלֵךְ Merx reads וַיַּשְׁלִךְ, taking קדים as subject, an admissible and probable correction.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 *There is a knowledge of natural things.* 12 *But wisdom is an excellent gift of God.*

SURELY there is [1]a vein for the silver, and a place for gold *where* they fine *it*.

[1] Or, *a mine*

CHAP. XXVIII. The beginning of this chapter is abrupt, and the connection with the preceding discourse somewhat obscure. The course of thought seems to be this. Job has declared his conviction that, notwithstanding apparent irregularities and many exceptions, the justice of God is sooner or later manifested in punishing the wicked: but the mystery is still unsolved; he cannot understand God's ways, he feels Him to be incomprehensible, and comes to one certain conclusion, that, although the faculties of man are marvellously developed in regard to all physical phenomena, he knows nothing of the true essential attributes of God. Wisdom in its essence belongs to God alone, it is incommunicable by its very nature, but in its practical applications man can attain to it by the fear of God, and by departing from evil.

1—11. These verses are remarkable for the knowledge of mining operations which they indicate in the writer. Commentators are now agreed as to the general meaning, and though many expressions are still obscure, and will probably remain matters of controversy, we find in them singularly accurate and graphic descriptions of the processes of miners. It is an interesting question where the writer could have acquired such minute and accurate knowledge; certainly not in Palestine, where mining was unknown. But in very remote ages, far more ancient than that assigned to Job, there were gold mines in Egypt; silver was brought from the far east by Phœnician merchants; iron was found, and copper mines were worked in the Sinaitic Peninsula by Egyptians from the 3rd dynasty, at least some thousand years before Job, until the 19th dynasty. See Introduction to Exodus, § 4. The impression made by the whole passage is that the writer and his contemporaries must have been acquainted with these operations, but probably as matters exciting astonishment by their novelty and strangeness. A great chieftain, whose camels were doubtless employed in transporting the productions of various regions, would have had opportunities, such as few Israelites, save in the age of Solomon, could have enjoyed, of exploring the excavations and watching the ingenious processes by which the metals were prepared for the use of man. The local colouring altogether belongs to Idumæa, the peninsula of Arabia, or to Egypt, certainly not to Palestine. This may be seen more distinctly when we consider the details.

"Modern science instead of confuting only confirms the aphorism of the patriarch Job, who has shadowed forth the downward persistence of the one (Silver), and the superficial distribution of the other (Gold). 'Surely there is a vein for the Silver—the Earth hath Dust of Gold.' The indisputable fact is that the chief quantities of gold originally imbedded in the upper portions of the vein have been broken up and transported, with the débris of the mountain-tops, into adjacent slopes and valleys. Silver and argentiferous lead, on the contrary, extended so largely downwards into the bowels of the earth, that they must yield enormous profit to the miner for ages to come." Sir Rod. Murchison.

1. *a vein*] Or, as in the margin, "a mine." The original word means "an issue," or, "place where any thing comes out." Silver stands first, probably because, at the time when the book was written, it was very scarce and precious, and used more generally for exchange. This indicates, though it may not prove, extreme antiquity. See Pictet, 'Les origines indo-germaniques.' I. p. 160, quoted above, ch. xxii. 26. He derives the word silver from "çila," a rock, and "bhara," to bear.

fine it] Two processes of fining were known to the ancients; one by washing, described by Diodorus, III. 11, as practised in Egypt, the

2 Iron is taken out of the [1]earth, and brass *is* molten *out of* the stone.

3 He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

4 The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; *even the waters* forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.

5 *As for* the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.

6 The stones of it *are* the place of sapphires: and it hath [1]dust of gold.

[1] Or, *gold ore.*

7 *There is* a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:

8 The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

9 He putteth forth his hand upon the [1]rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

[1] Or, *flint.*

10 He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

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other by smelting: the Hebrew has a technical term for each; the word here used denotes the former process.

2. *brass is molten out of the stone*] Or, **and stone** (ore) **is molten to copper.** Job does not seem to speak in this verse of mining, but of processes whereby iron and copper are extracted by fusion from ore found on the surface.

3. The miner's work is now described. He setteth an end to darkness (*i.e.* lets in light to the very abode of darkness, sc. by opening a shaft, or by the lantern which he bears with him), and to all perfection (*i.e.* with the utmost completeness) he explores the stone of darkness, and dense blackness. The speaker may have stood at the shaft as it was opened, and watched the miner as he descended, curiously exploring every stone for indications of metal.

4. This verse is obscure: the most probable interpretation appears to be, **he**, the miner, **sinks a shaft away from the neighbourhood of settlers, unaided by the foot they hang swinging to and fro far from men.** The word rendered *flood* in the A. V., or shaft, upon which the interpretation of the first clause depends, means properly a watercourse, or narrow channel, but modern critics are all but unanimous in rendering it here "a shaft." Unaided by the foot, literally, forgotten by the foot, seems a natural and accurate description of the miner hanging on the rope and unable to use his feet; but it may possibly mean forgotten by the feet of wayfarers, afar from the haunts of men. See Note below. The last clause is not questioned.

5. Man's industry and enterprise give him mastery of the earth; he tills the surface for food, and, not satisfied with that, penetrates its interior, and turns it up as by the action of subterraneous fire: this alludes most probably to the blasting of rocks in mines, which was practised on a large scale by the ancients: see note on *v.* 9. A similar expression is used in the Koran, Sur. II. 66, and XXX. 8.

6. *and it hath dust of gold*] Or, **and dust of gold is for him,** sc. for the miner. The great riches, which reward the toils and talents of the miners, are contrasted with the empty results of speculation about the hidden things of God's government.

7, 8. *There is a path*] Or, **A path which the eagle knoweth not, and the eye of the vulture hath not espied it.** In the next clause, "for the lion's whelps" read "the fierce beasts," literally, "the sons of pride or fierceness." The mine is a path which none but man could discern. The ingenuity of man is thus contrasted with the instinctive sagacity of animals, the far-reaching and keen vision of the eagle and hawk, the strength and force of the lion. The astonishment and admiration excited by the natural powers of the brute creation are especially noticeable in the monuments of Egypt. Job shews how far more wonderful and admirable are the faculties of man.

9. *the rock*] The word so translated means "granite" or "quartz." Job evidently alludes to excavations in the granitic and porphyritic rocks; the expression, "putteth forth his hand," denotes the severe and continued exertions required to penetrate the rock.

overturneth] Sc. by fire. Pliny describes various processes of blasting; 'N. H.' XXXIII. iv. § 21: Occursant—silices. Hos igni et aceto rumpunt. Peracto opere—mons fractus cadit ab sese longe, fragore qui concipi humana mente non possit, et flatu incredibili. Spectant victores ruinam naturæ.

10. *rivers*] Or, **channels,** to drain the mine, a process of great labour and danger in the infancy of hydraulic science, yet one which was familiar to the Egyptians from the earliest times. The word here rendered "rivers" is Egyptian; in the singular it is specially used of the Nile: but in the plural, as in this passage, it means canals, Brugsch ('Dict. H.,' p. 34) gives διῶρυξ, fossa, or river. Dillmann understands it to mean shafts; but this passage refers altogether to the management of water.

11 He bindeth the floods †from overflowing; and *the thing that is* hid bringeth he forth to light.

† Heb. *from weeping.*

12 But where shall wisdom be found? and where *is* the place of understanding?

13 Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

14 [a] The depth saith, It *is* not in me: and the sea saith, *It is* not with me.

[a] Rom. 11. 33, 34.

15 †It [b] cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed *for* the price thereof.

† Heb. *Fine gold shall not be given for it.*

[b] Prov. 3. 14. & 8. 11, 19. & 16. 16.

16 It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

17 The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it *shall not be for* ‖jewels of fine gold.

‖ Or, *vessels of fine gold.*

18 No mention shall be made of ‖coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom *is* above rubies.

‖ Or, *Ramoth.*

19 The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

20 [c] Whence then cometh wisdom? and where *is* the place of understanding?

[c] ver. 12

21 Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the ‖air.

‖ Or, *heaven.*

22 Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

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every precious thing] Laid bare by the receding waters.

11. *He bindeth*, &c.] This denotes the perfect accomplishment of one of the most difficult works; the miner not only turns the course of subterranean rivers which he meets in his excavation, but prevents the least leakage, or "weeping," a picturesque and perhaps technical term. It is curious to see the operations of railway-tunnelling thus anticipated.

forth to light] The last grand result, the hidden treasures of darkness are brought into the light for the use and glory of man. What limits can be assigned to powers and capacities which have thus conquered nature?

12. The contrast: these powers do not advance man a single step in the search after the only substantial principle of existence. He cannot find wisdom, the reason which deals with principles, or understanding, the faculty which discerns and appreciates their application. The meaning of Hebrew words which express wisdom, understanding, &c. is well explained in an article of the 'Studien und Kritiken,' 1871, p. 325.

13. *price*] The LXX. have "the way thereof," an easy, but less suitable reading. Job points out that there is absolutely no relation between the results of human ingenuity and true wisdom, they are utterly incommensurable. Man may traverse the habitable earth, explore the depths of the ocean, sail over all seas, possess all that the diver, the miner has collected, and the merchant transported from India to Ethiopia, but he acquires nothing which he can exchange for wisdom. This is no mere truism. Wisdom and the acquisition of wealth are inseparable in the minds of most men; when that acquisition involves the discipline and development of high moral and intellectual faculties, it has a claim readily conceded to it by the leaders of human thought. Job, doubtless, taught a truth new, and strange, and likely to be contested by many of his contemporaries, one perhaps which the worldly spirit of Eliphaz would receive with difficulty, which many would reject with scorn. Hence, we may account for the careful, and evidently studied, enumeration of all that constituted the wealth of the merchant princes of the East: it seems to us perhaps somewhat too elaborate, but each touch probably reached a special point, and the passion for jewels and precious stones has always been characteristic of the Semitic race: a point strikingly brought out in the work of Miss Rothschild.

16. *gold of Ophir*] An Israelite probably would not have used this word before gold was fetched from India in the reign of Solomon; but it is impossible to say how soon Phœnician traffickers may have brought the thing and the name to western Asia. In an Egyptian inscription, referring certainly to a period before Moses, distinct mention is made of precious stones, which chieftains *of the Phœnicians* had collected in their voyages. See Brugsch, 'Histoire d'Egypte,' p. 74.

17. *jewels of fine gold*] Or **vases of gold.**

18, 19. The names of these jewels are not determined with accuracy, nor is this a matter of any moment: it suffices to note the accumulation of wealth at a very remote age, which, vast as it may seem, is fully borne out by the monuments of Egypt.

rubies] Rather pearls, or red coral.

21. *from the fowls of the air*] The vast range and keenness of sight in birds of prey was regarded by all as a symbol, by some as an indication, of wisdom. Job, probably, had

23 God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

24 For he looketh to the ends of the earth, *and* seeth under the whole heaven;

25 To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

26 When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:

27 Then did he see it, and [1]declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

28 And unto man he said, Behold, [d]the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.

[1] Or, *number it*

[d] Psal. 111. 10. Prov. 1. 7. & 9. 10.

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a special reason for naming the creatures in which his contemporaries saw depositaries of knowledge above that of man.

22. By a grand personification Job summons the abyss (Heb. Abaddon, see xxvi. 6) and death to bear witness. Compare Prov. xv. 11. They have heard a rumour. Comparing this with xxvi. 5, 6, we may perhaps infer that Job felt that some dim intimation of the great truth reached the spirits of the departed even in their state of imperfect consciousness, but the thought is vague and darkly expressed: it may be that he simply means that the dead and the living are equally incapable of comprehending the wisdom of God.

23—27. God alone knows wisdom; it is not only His inherent endowment, but is manifested in the order of creation: it belongs to His omniscience, and is declared by His omnipotence. It is present to Him as an objective reflection of Himself, which He sees and declares, takes as the ideal of the visible universe, and examines in every detail. Such appears to be the meaning of a passage, in which a portion of the eternal truth expressed by the word Trinity is, so to speak, adumbrated. Wisdom is not actually personified; but we have a representation of it as an objective and substantial existence, one with, and yet distinct from its author; a representation which finds its true explanation in the doctrine of the Personal Word.

28. The wisdom of God consists in the absolute knowledge of all principles, causes, and effects in the universe; the wisdom of man, simply and wholly in unquestioning submission, and obedience. It is to be remarked that Job thus, unconsciously as it would seem, sets the seal upon his own triumph. His character is described by God Himself as "one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." The Hebrew has the same word in both places; the reference is somewhat obscured by the A. V., which has "eschewed" in one place and "depart from" in the other.

NOTE on Chap. xxviii. 4.

Merx reads מעפר, "out of the ground," LXX. ἀπὸ κονίας, instead of מעם גר, which he renders "away from a sojourner," but holds to be unintelligible. The description of a miner in a place far from the haunts of man seems scarcely open to such objection. "Forgotten of the foot," a literal rendering of the text, he also rejects as meaningless, and suggests that some technical term for "raised by a machine," has been lost. The next clause he renders "so they swing *held* by *the hand of* men, they wave to and fro." Little is gained by pure conjecture, but the LXX. certainly represent a different, if not a preferable, reading. Merx suggests an unnecessary and awkward change in the punctuation of *vv.* 6, 7, "and dust of gold—he has a way." *v.* 7. "The eagle knoweth *him* not."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Job bemoaneth himself of his former prosperity and honour.

MOREOVER Job [†]continued his parable, and said,

2 Oh that I were as *in* months

[†] Heb. *added to take up.*

Chap. XXIX. Job having thus declared fully the principles by which he is guided in his consideration of God's government, reverts to a pathetic description of his present misery contrasted with his former happiness. The style of the rest of his discourse differs somewhat from that of the preceding portions; while it is equally conspicuous for power, conciseness, beauty, and copiousness of illustration, it is clearer, and flows in a more equable and limpid current: it is as though the storm-clouds are broken, and things stand out in their true light and just proportions, now that the struggles of contending emotions are passing away. Job does not, indeed, and cannot, comprehend the cause of his calamities, or reconcile them with what he could conjecture of the Almighty, by Whose hand they are inflicted; but he sees them as they are; the present and the past

past, as *in* the days *when* God preserved me;

3 When his [1]candle shined upon my head, *and when* by his light I walked *through* darkness;

4 As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God *was* upon my tabernacle;

5 When the Almighty *was* yet with me, *when* my children *were* about me;

6 When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured [2]me out rivers of oil;

7 When I went out to the gate through the city, *when* I prepared my seat in the street!

8 The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, *and* stood up.

9 The princes refrained talking, and laid *their* hand on their mouth.

10 [3]The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

11 When the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness to me:

12 Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and *him that had* none to help him.

13 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I

[1] Or, *lamp*.

[2] Heb. *with me*.

[3] Heb. *The voice of the nobles was hid*.

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are before him; and though he cannot formally express a hope, for which he has no sure objective grounds, yet the tone of his pleading with God indicates a deep undercurrent of pious feeling, while the complete and exhaustive examination of a life, which has been passed in the faithful discharge of duty, and in abstinence from all forms of wilful sin, cannot but impart some comfort, and suggest some hope, or at least some preparation for hope, to a conscience singularly free from offence. In this chapter we have a description of the life of a great chieftain, no mere sheikh of a nomad tribe, but the prince of a state in which civilization had made considerable progress, and laws were administered with intelligence and care. The points which he enumerates are important for their bearing on the date of the work; they belong to an early age, and are entirely free from allusions to habits or institutions of later origin, from aught that can remind us of Judah under the successors of David.

2. *months past*] Or, "months of old;" Job looks back to his lost happiness as to a thing long since past away: it is lost in a mist of blinding sorrow.

when God preserved me] Job never omits to refer all to God. It is the habit, or, as old logicians say, the *form* of his mind; it belongs to his inmost nature.

3. *When his candle*, &c.] **Lamp**, cf. xviii. 6.

4. *youth*] Or, **manhood**; lit. my harvest, *i.e.* the maturity of middle age (τῆς ἀκμῆς), when Job was enjoying the fruits of earlier exertions. The A. V. follows the Vulg. adolescentiæ; but, with the exception of Rosen., critics agree in the interpretation here given.

the secret of God] **the counsel**; or, Job means the full and uninterrupted communications of grace; when God made Himself known and felt as an ever-present counsellor and friend. The same word is used, xix. 19; Prov. iii. 32.

6. *butter*] **whey**, or curds; a common figure for overflowing abundance of the simple luxuries of pastoral life: cf. xx. 17. Butter was only used medicinally by the ancients.

7. *went out*] Job resided in his own encampment, but at stated intervals went to the neighbouring city to take his seat as chieftain and judge in the gate, where justice was administered: cf. v. 4. Merx follows LXX. and for "gate" renders "in the morning." The change is unnecessary, but not improbable.

through the city] Rather, **up to the city**. Job does not describe his passage through the city, but to the gate. Cities were generally built on heights, but the expression "up to the city" is common in most languages.

in the street] Or, **broadway**; the word so rendered means the broad space within the city-gate, where causes were tried; corresponding to the agora or forum. See v. 4.

8. *hid themselves*] As though unworthy to catch Job's eye; with more than Spartan reverence for age and dignity.

10. *The nobles held their peace*] Lit. were hidden as to voice, *i.e.* were suddenly silenced by awe on the entrance of the great chief. The simple organization of the state is strikingly like that described in the Homeric poems. It is aristocratical; the rank and influence of the chief depend upon his personal character, he sits as primus inter pares. See also the notices of the primitive constitution of the Aryans in Pictet, 'Orig. indo-g.' II. 383. The construction of this clause is awkward. Merx suspects an erratum.

11. Job now dilates upon the effects of his work as judge: when he entered, all who feared oppression and had suffered wrong rejoiced; they knew what to expect from him.

12, 13. The true test of a judge's integrity then and always in the East. Compare

caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem.

15 I was eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame.

16 I *was* a father to the poor: and the cause *which* I knew not I searched out.

17 And I brake †the jaws of the wicked, and †plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

18 Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply *my* days as the sand.

19 My root *was* †spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.

20 My glory *was* †fresh in me, and my bow was †renewed in my hand.

21 Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.

22 After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them.

Heb. *the* *cheek teeth,* *or the* *grinders.* † Heb. *cast.*

† Heb. *opened.* † Heb. *new.* † Heb. *changed.*

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the account which Chnumhotep, a functionary under the 12th dynasty of Egypt, gives of his administration, in an inscription at Beni-hassan, quoted in the Essay on Egyptian History in the first volume of this work, p. 450.

14. This beautiful figure is common in Hebrew and in Arabic poetry. The robes of state worn on such occasions by judges and chieftains were thus regarded as a symbol or representation of the clothing of righteousness; the man is lost in the judge, all private, selfish feelings are covered over, forgotten, and buried. The two clauses are no mere tautology. Job put on righteousness, that was his free act, and it in return clung to him, became at once a permanent habit and a glorious ornament.

diadem] *i.e.* the turban of costly shawls wound round the head; a primeval custom.

15. The following verses, though spoken without direct reference to the speech of Eliphaz, contain a complete answer to his insinuations and charges. See ch. xxii.

16. *which*] Or, **of the man whom I knew not**. Job sees a poor stranger, who has no claims upon him save those of common humanity, and he takes pains to inquire into his cause: the expression "search" implies difficulty.

17. As advocate Job has won the cause, then as chief he enforces the sentence: he is advocate, judge, sheriff, and executioner; a necessary and effective combination of offices in an imperfectly organized community.

18. *Then I said*] Job doubted not that the blessing attached by man's opinion, and, as he was then assured, by God's providence, to the faithful administration of justice, would be with him to the end. The expression of this conviction is somewhat obscure.

in my nest] This may mean in full possession of house and family (thus Dillm., Lee). The latter clause contains a word which our version renders "sand," an apt and common figure for boundless extent. Later commentators generally assume that the word means "phœnix," the bird of legend, a type of immortality, which, after a secular period of existence, was consumed, together with its nest, in a pile of fragrant woods, lighted by fire from heaven, only to reappear with renovated youth and strength. This interpretation rests on Hebrew tradition (Talmud Sanh. 108, ap. Delitzsch, see too Buxt. 'Lex.' p. 720), and it suits the preceding clause, I said I shall die (not *in*, but) with my nest. On the other side it may be reasonably objected that the common version gives a satisfactory sense, and that very strong grounds should be produced before we admit the recognition of a fabulous, though beautiful and significant, legend. It is not a fact, as has been stated, that the word is Egyptian. Bennu is the well-known and common designation of the bird identified with the legend of the Phœnix, a legend which is comparatively of late origin, resting on the misapprehension of an astronomical symbol. It is said that koli, which is compared with the Hebrew *chol*, is the Hieroglyphic form for the Coptic alloe; but alloe means not phœnix, but palm-tree; and no such word as koli is to be found in the Hieroglyphic dictionaries of Brugsch or Birch. The best account of the meaning of the legend is given by Lauth, 'Moses der Hebräer,' p. 55 ff.

19, 20. Read, **My root will be open to the waters, and the dew will rest on my branches; my honour will remain fresh with me, and my bow will be ever strong** (lit. renewed, ever young) **in my hand.** Job here speaks of his former hopes, not of his former estate.

21. The following passage is closely connected with the preceding verses, but introduces a new theme, viz. Job's position among his countrymen as a statesman and leader.

22. *dropped*] The dropping of dew, showers, and the heavy rains of spring, are common figures for eloquence, especially in oriental poetry; cf. Deut. xxxii. 2; and Homer's account of the eloquence of Ulysses.

23 And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain.

24 *If* I laughed on them, they believed *it* not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.

25 I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one *that* comforteth the mourners.

CHAPTER XXX.

1 *Job's honour is turned into extreme contempt.* 15 *His prosperity into calamity.*

BUT now *they that are* †younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.

2 Yea, whereto *might* the strength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was perished?

3 For want and famine *they were* ‖solitary; fleeing into the wilderness †in former time desolate and waste.

4 Who cut up mallows by the

† Heb. *of fewer days than I.*

‖ Or, *dark as the night*

† Heb. *yesternight.*

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24. *they believed it not*] As though it was too great a condescension to be realized. Thus the old Versions, Bp. Wordsworth, Merx, &c.

they cast not down] They never attempted even to oppose my views, and thus bring a shade of displeasure over my countenance; they rejoiced in its bright and unclouded light.

25. *I chose out their way*] Here he speaks as a leader of the forces of his tribe; he alone determines the course of their expedition.

as a king] With the power and state of a king surrounded by his guards; in Job's case conceded by the love and esteem of his countrymen.

as one that comforteth the mourners] Brave as Job's comrades might be they derived their comfort and strength from him, turned to him in all difficulties, looked up to him for support under all losses.

CHAP. XXX. Job's last bitter outcry. Formerly a prince among nobles he is now despised by the vilest of men (1—10); insults are heaped on him simply because he is afflicted of God (11—14). The afflictions reach him on all sides, from within and from without; his soul is full of terrors and anguish, his body consumed and tortured, he is cast into the dust (15—19). The greatest of all miseries is that his prayers are still unheard, that God is cruel to him (20—22). So he despairs of life (23, 24); yet Job had ever been compassionate and pitiful (25), and looked for good and light (26), but is now reduced to bitter and ceaseless lamentations (27—31).

1—10. These verses contain a very remarkable description of the outcast hordes of the desert. Job has already touched upon this subject, see ch. xxiv. 5, 6. It is evident that the writer has watched such wretches with an observant eye. The traits are not general but specific; and they describe a horde driven out from their homes by a stronger race. There is reason to suppose that in Idumæa and Bashan Troglodytes, a weak nerveless race, survived their ruin for some considerable time, lingering near their old abodes in hopeless degradation, like the Diws described by Gobineau, see note on ch. xxiv. 5—9. The colouring belongs, in fact, altogether to the age and country of Job; the description stands alone in its vivid portraiture of a wretchedness unknown or unrecorded in Palestine.

1. *But now*] This points the contrast between Job's present condition and that described in the last verses of the preceding chapter.

whose fathers] The wretched outcasts, unfit for the very meanest offices, unfit to be used even as dogs.

2. *old age*] Mature age, or, more probably, **manly vigour**. Job describes wretches who have no stamina, weak, nerveless, destined to early decay, and premature death. The word occurs v. 26, in the sense of mature age; the exact meaning appears to be "perfection," either of strength or age; LXX. συντέλεια; Syr. all strength. The noble Idumæan may often have looked on the poor savages with the feeling how impossible it was to raise them out of their degradation, unfit, as they were, for any work requiring strength or thought.

3. *solitary*] The word so rendered occurs Isa. xlix. 21, but, with that exception, is peculiar to this book; it denotes barrenness, the utter absence of vital force, limbs stiffened and cramped by long famine: see xv. 34.

fleeing into] Literally, "gnawing the wilderness," having, so to speak, for all food, the dust of the waste and desolate desert. The word, which is peculiar to Job, has this sense in Arabic. Merx supplies "the herbage," from Theodotion, who has ἅλιμα.

in former time] The Hebrew means literally, "the past night," which may give the sense, "the yesterday of waste and desolation," *i.e.* places which had been hitherto utterly desolate: thus Hirz. and Ew.; Dillmann is disposed to accept Olsh.'s conjecture (ארץ), which seems needless. Merx rejects the expression as meaningless.

4. Job defines more exactly the food of the poor vagabonds, the mallow, a salt herb, affording scanty and precarious nourishment

bushes, and juniper roots *for* their meat.

5 They were driven forth from among *men*, (they cried after them as *after* a thief;)

6 To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, *in* † caves of the earth, and *in* the rocks.

† Heb. *holes.*

7 Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.

8 *They were* children of fools, yea, children of † base men: they were viler than the earth.

† Heb. *men of no name.*

9 [a] And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword.

[a] Psal. 35. 15 & 69. 12.

10 They abhor me, they flee far from me, † and spare not to spit in my face.

† Heb. *and withhold not spittle from my face.*

11 Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.

12 Upon *my* right *hand* rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.

13 They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.

14 They came *upon me* as a wide breaking in *of waters:* in the desolation they rolled themselves *upon me.*

15 Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue † my soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud.

† Heb. *my principal one.*

16 And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.

17 My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest.

18 By the great force *of my disease* is my garment changed: it bind-

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to the dwellers in the desert. Modern travellers describe the plant, which now bears the name used by Job, as a species of shrub common in the desert of Syria: it is about 1½ feet high; in hot seasons the poor natives gather round this plant (under whose shade a scanty vegetation is preserved), seeking for edible herbs. Wetzstein, 'Hauran,' p. 41. The same word is used Gen. xxi. 15.

6. *in caves of the earth*] As in the marg. **holes.** Hordes of troglodytes lived in the districts adjoining the Hauran: a full description of their caves is given by Wetzstein, 'Hauran,' p. 44. Merx takes *vv.* 6, 7 to be the words of the people who drive the outcasts from the city.

7. *gathered together*] Or, **huddled up in heaps;** so most critics, but Dillmann accepts the rendering of the A. V.; their meeting-places are among nettles.

8. *viler than the earth*] . Rather, **they are driven** (or scourged) **out of the land,** *i.e.* the cultivated districts.

In all this description Job must not be supposed to allude to the men of station and wealth who came to visit him in his affliction; but to the vagabonds who insulted him when he was abandoned by his friends.

9. *their song*] Cf. xvii. 6.

10. Cf. Num. xii. 14, and Isai. l. 6.

11. The interpretation of this verse is disputed, but that given in the text is defended by Delitzsch. All Job's calamities were a result of God's anger, Who loosed Job's cord, the life-power which holds together our bodily frame. See Note below.

let loose the bridle] *i.e.* cast off all restraint of reverence or fear.

12. *Upon my right hand*] Thus, in Ps. cix. 6, let Satan (or the adversary) stand at his right hand, the place of vantage.

the youth] Or, **the brood**; an expression by which Job denotes the base crowd of his persecutors, but which many critics, following the Vulg., understand to mean calamities, an increasing crowd, or upgrowth of sorrows. This interpretation seems forced and unnatural; in fact, it can only be supported by altering the text in *v.* 15.

ways of their destruction] The expression denotes long-continued persecutions; they proceed like an invading army, making for itself a road through the wilderness.

13. *they have no helper*] Job is insulted even by those who themselves are without kith or kin, lonely wretches. It seems to be a proverbial expression of contempt, "ye are fellows without helpers, with no friends, scouted by all." The reading, however, is suspected; the Vulg. has, "and there is none to help me." The LXX. had a different reading.

15. *my soul*] Literally, "my dignity;" me once noblest among the noble, with reference to the last chapter. See note on Ps. xli. 12.

17. *pierced*] The leprosy eats away the flesh and nerves, and then corrodes the bones, so that the limbs fall off piecemeal.

my sinews] Rather, **my gnawing pains.** The word occurs only here and in *v.* 3, where see note.

eth me about as the collar of my coat.

19 He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes.

20 I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me *not*.

21 Thou art † become cruel to me: with † thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me.

22 Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride *upon it*, and dissolvest my ‖ substance.

23 For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and *to* the house appointed for all living.

24 Howbeit he will not stretch out *his* hand to the † grave, though they cry in his destruction.

25 [b] Did not I weep † for him that was in trouble? was *not* my soul grieved for the poor?

26 When I looked for good, then evil came *unto me:* and when I waited for light, there came darkness.

27 My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.

28 I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, *and* I cried in the congregation.

29 [c] I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to ‖ owls.

† Heb. *turned to be cruel.* † Heb. *the strength of thy hand.* ‖ Or, *wisdom.*

† Heb. *heap.* [b] Ps. 35. 13. Rom. 12. 15. † Heb. *for him that was hard of day?* [c] Ps. 102. 6. ‖ Or, *ostriches.*

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18. *By the great force*] The very garment or mantle which Job wears is changed by his disease in form and appearance; it sticks fast to his broken skin, it girds him tight.

collar of my coat] Literally, "the mouth of my tunic," *i.e.* the aperture for the neck; cf. Ex. xxviii. 32. Our version, though rather awkward, is substantially correct. Job feels almost strangled by the cloak which cleaves to his diseased body. See Note below.

20. *and thou regardest me*] The word "*not*" is wrong. Job represents the Almighty as looking on calm and pitiless, when he stands, holding out his hands in prayer.

21. *Thou art become cruel*] Or, Thou art **changed**, *and become* cruel to me. The marginal translation, "Thou art turned to be cruel," gives the true sense: Job feels above all things the change in his relations to God, once his friend, now to all appearance his enemy.

with thy strong hand] As against the Egyptians, "with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."

22. *causest me to ride upon it*] An awkward rendering, but equivalent in meaning to the forcible expression, "borne away by the wind:" cf. xxvii. 21.

23. Job thus retains the conviction which he has all along expressed, that his sufferings will only end with death. The absolute abandonment of all earthly hope was the real condition of his trial. It was important that it should be recorded here, in his last discourse, immediately before his final vindication of his former life, and his determination, under all circumstances, to appeal to God Himself for judgment (xxxi. 35), and to hold fast to his righteousness.

24. A very obscure verse: among the various renderings, many of them wholly groundless, which have been proposed, that of Ewald, adopted by Bertheau, Hahn, Delitzsch, and Dillmann, seems on the whole nearest to the letter, and best adapted to the context: **Howbeit will not a man in his ruinous fall stretch out his hand? In his calamity will he not complain thereof?** See Note below. In the next verse Job appeals to his own conduct, when others had thus stretched out their hands, and cried out to himself for help.

26. *looked for good*] This may refer to his feelings when the first great affliction came; prayer he then believed would bring back good, *i.e.* prosperity and light. Cf. Jer. viii. 15; xiv. 19.

27—29. These verses describe the intense agony of Job's supplications.

27. *My bowels*] Or, entrails; with the Hebrews the seat of all deep inward yearnings.

prevented me] *i.e.* come upon me suddenly and unexpectedly. Cf. Ps. xviii. 5.

28. *without the sun*] Or, **I go about blackened** (but) **not with the sun.** The blackness, of which Job speaks, is produced by disease, not by the heat of the sun. This is preferable to the interpretation of Delitzsch and others. The reading חמא, wrath, Vulg. and Syr., is curious; still more so that of the LXX. ἄνευ φιμοῦ.

in the congregation] *i.e.* in public. Cf. Prov. xxvi. 26. This is the last proof how utterly the noble nature was broken down: at first, Job could speak words of resignation; then, at least, he could subdue all expression of anguish; it was not until he had sat in silence seven long days in the presence of his would-be comforters that he cried aloud before men.

29. *dragons*] Here, as elsewhere, the word so rendered means **jackals**. Job compares

30 My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat.

31 My harp also is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

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his mournings to the long melancholy cries of the jackal and of the ostrich; described by travellers in the east as inexpressibly mournful and piercing.

30. *upon me*] Or, **from me**; lit. "from upon me;" *i.e.* it falls from me in blackened shreds: see above, *v.* 28, and note on ii. 7.

31. *organ*] Or, **pipe**: see note on xxi. 12.

This long and painful enumeration of Job's miseries comes in the right place; *after* the declaration which shews the unshaken firmness of his convictions, and his deep sense of the absolute, though unsearchable wisdom of Him by Whom he was afflicted; and *before* his last complete vindication of his integrity. The outer gloom goes on increasing to the very end of his trial; the exposure to shame and ignominy, inward terrors, loathsome disease, unanswered prayer, certainty of near death, the nervous system wholly prostrate, all these in their combination give him not a momentary repose, and draw from his heart reluctant, but unrestrained complainings. Satan has had his will, he has reached within the skin (intus et in cute, see ch. ii. 4); and, though forbidden to take the life, he has done that which was sufficient to prove the result of a mortal trial, he has made Job feel that life was gone; but with all that he has not advanced one step towards real success; the deeper the sense of God's alienation the more earnest are Job's pleadings for a hearing; he holds fast his integrity, and, far from renouncing God, only seeks His presence.

NOTES on Chap. xxx. 11, 18, and 24.

11. Other critics follow the LXX., Vulg. *φαρέτραν αὐτοῦ*, or render the word, "his cord or bowstring." The various interpretations proposed by critics present great difficulties. If יתרו, the Cethib, be rendered his "bowstring" the word פתח can scarcely apply to it. It never means quiver, which would give a good sense. The second clause is rendered in the Vulg. "et frenum posuit in os meum," which is manifestly wrong. The LXX. *ἀνοίξας γὰρ φαρέτραν αὐτοῦ*. Merx alters the text, but in a very unsatisfactory way.

18. יתחפש from חפש, seek, search, seems to mean "makes itself sought for," *i.e.* disguises itself, is so changed in appearance as not to be recognized; thus in 1 K. xx. 38.

24. The LXX. have *εἰ γὰρ ὄφελον δυναίμην ἐμαυτὸν χειρώσασθαι*, which supposes a different reading. The other Greek versions give little help: see Field, 'Hex.,' in loc. The Vulg. verumtamen non ad consumptionem eorum emittis manum tuam. Nevertheless Thou (for He) does not put forth his hand for their ruin. The Syr., Nevertheless He will not stretch forth His hand against me, and when I call upon Him He will save me. The Arabic as usual follows. The sense is good, but cannot be elicited from the present text. The Targums have two renderings, which, though differing strangely, imply that the text before them was in its present state. The first clause may be rendered as in the A. V. The second also, if להן could be accounted for. Modern critics are divided. Some would take בעי for prayer; thus Rosen., "prayer avails nought, He will stretch forth His hand." But this does not agree with the parallel clause. There can be no doubt that ב is the preposition, and עי either a verbal noun, "ruin" or "destruction," or "a ruinous heap;" the former is preferable, corresponding more nearly to פידו; if taken, the subject of ישלח must be the sufferer. So that, with Ew., we have, Only shall not a man in his ruin lift up the hand. In the second clause, להן, "to them," fem. Ew. renders it "deswegen, darum," "for those things," on that account; a construction which is accepted by Hahn, Dillm., and other critics; he refers to Ruth i. 13, where the A. V. has "for them," an incorrect rendering, and Dan. ii. 6. This gives on the whole the best sense:

Only in destruction shall not one stretch forth *his* hand?
In his calamity shall he not complain thereof?

Still, as Dillmann admits, the passage remains difficult, and he proposes to read לֹא יְשַׁוֵּעַ, shall he not cry out. Jerome seems to have read, אִם יפל הו ישוע. Mr Warburton suggests a translation which suits the context, and appears reconcileable with the Hebrew: Surely not upon a ruin (like this frame of mine) will He stretch forth His hand; when one is in misfortune sent by Him then is there (reason for) a cry. Merx regards the verse as hopelessly corrupt.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Job maketh a solemn protestation of his integrity in several duties.

I MADE a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

2 For what portion of God *is there* from above? and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high?

3 *Is* not destruction to the wicked? and a strange *punishment* to the workers of iniquity?

4 [a] Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?

[a] 2 Chron. 16. 9. ch. 34. 21. Prov. 5. 21. & 15. 3.

5 If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit;

6 [†] Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.

[†] Heb. *Let him weigh me in balances of justice.*

7 If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands;

8 *Then* let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out.

9 If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or *if* I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;

10 *Then* let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.

CHAP. XXXI. Job concludes the whole series of discourses with a solemn protestation of his integrity in all relative duties. The points which he selects belong altogether to natural religion, or rather to religion as it was understood and practised by the Patriarchs, without a single reference or allusion to the specific institutions of Israel. He dwells in succession upon inward purity and integrity (1—11); upon equity in dealing with dependants (13—15); upon compassion to the poor and destitute (16—23); upon freedom from covetousness, from the pride of wealth (24—25), and from the earliest form of false religion (26—28), upon superiority to envious and malignant feelings (29—30); upon liberality to neighbours and to strangers (31—32); upon honesty in confession of transgressions; and winds up with a solemn call upon the Almighty to hear his protestation and to judge his cause, confident of a complete and triumphant vindication. A few words in conclusion, which may perhaps have been transposed by copyists (see note on *v.* 38), declare Job's integrity in his relations as a great landowner. Exceeding interest attaches to this chapter as containing a complete code of patriarchal morality. There are several points of resemblance with the 125th chapter of the Egyptian Ritual, or Todtenbuch, in which the departed spirit undergoes an examination before the 42 assessors of Osiris.

1. *why then*] Or "how then," how was it possible that my thoughts should wander? Instead of "with" the original has "to," *i.e.* Job prescribed a law to his eyes. Of all the senses Job singles out the finest, that through which the approaches of sensuality are most subtle and dangerous. The declaration stands well nigh alone in the Old Testament, and anticipates the saying of our Lord, in Matt. **v. 28.**

2. Instead of "is there" it would be clearer to substitute "would be." Job asks, for what would be my portion in case of my giving way to secret lust? This question confirms the view taken of Job's discourse in ch. xxvii.; see note on *v.* 11, and compare *v.* 13 in the same chapter. The first clause thus gives expression of absolute mastery over concupiscence, assured by a perfect conviction of God's retributive justice and omniscience.

5. *vanity*] Inward falsehood, inconsistency between practice and profession.

6. *Let me be weighed*, &c.] Or, **Let Him weigh me in a balance of righteousness**: the reference is to the day of final account, when all actions and thoughts will be weighed and requited according to the absolute law of righteousness. The Arabians call it the "balance of works," a phrase which later Hebrew writers translate "balance of righteousness." In the Egyptian Ritual the balance forms an essential part of the Judgment of Osiris; see the Vignette to the 125th chapter of the E. R. or Todtenbuch, Pl. 4.

that God may know] Rather, **and God will know my integrity**. Job's one longing is for full searching inquiry, which must issue in his vindication.

7. *The way*] *i.e.* of God's law written in the heart. "*After mine eyes*" refers to *v.* 1.

8. *let me sow*] The phrase is proverbial; cf. Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 33; Amos v. 11: John iv. 37. In the second clause Ewald and others render **plants** or "produce," for "offspring;" this is required by the context.

9. *If mine heart*] Render, **If my heart hath been befooled for a woman.** For the next clause cf. xxiv. 15; Prov. vii. 7.

10. *grind unto another*] Be reduced to slavery; grinding is the work assigned in the east to the lowest slaves, and more especially

11 For this *is* an heinous crime; yea, it *is* an iniquity *to be punished by* the judges.

12 For it *is* a fire *that* consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.

13 If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me;

14 What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?

15 Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and [1] did not one fashion us in the womb?

[1] Or, *did he not fashion us in one womb?*

16 If I have withheld the poor from *their* desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;

17 Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;

18 (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as *with* a father, and I have guided [1] her from my mother's womb;)

[1] That is, *the widow.*

19 If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering;

20 If his loins have not blessed me, and *if* he were *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

21 If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate:

22 *Then* let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from [1] the bone.

[1] Or, *the chanel-bone.*

23 For destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.

24 If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence;

25 If I rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, and because mine hand had † gotten much;

† Heb. *found much.*

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to women. See Exod. xi. 5; Is. xlvii. 2: but Job refers probably in both clauses of this verse to the deeper degradation of the unhappy captive, καὶ ἐμὸν λέχος ἀντιόωσα.

12. *destruction*] Heb. Abaddon: *i.e.* to hell: see xxvi. 6, xxviii. 22, and Prov. ii. 18, vi. 27—35, ix. 18.

13. *despise the cause*] A very important statement, which proves that slaves had legal rights, which, though enforced with difficulty against harsh and oppressive employers, were recognised by men of integrity. Thus in the Egyptian Ritual (c. 125, p. 252, Birch) calumniating a slave is connected with injuring the gods; the just treatment of dependants holds a foremost place in the encomium of Chnumhotep the governor of Sah, under the 12th dynasty. See Bunsen's 'Egypt.' 2 ed., Vol. v. p. 728. 2.

14. *when God riseth up*] Sc. in judgment, as Job doubted not that He would rise up, though "the day" might be unknown. See ch. xxiv. 1, and compare xix. 25.

15. *one fashion us*] This is better than the margin which follows the LXX. and Syr. The Vulg. Targ. and modern critics generally agree with the Authorised Version.

18. *he was brought up*] *i.e.* the fatherless. The second clause refers to the poor widow, *v.* 16: in the passage quoted on *v.* 13, Chnumhotep, the functionary there spoken of, dwells specially on kindness to the widow.

21. *my help in the gate*] Friends and supporters in the court of justice: see xxix. 7.

22. *mine arm*] As a strictly retributive punishment for abuse of power and influence. Job may refer to the peculiar sufferings, which, though innocent, he was then undergoing: see note on xxx. 17.

from the bone] *i.e.* the channel-bone, as in the marg.

23. *was a terror*] The A. V. is probably correct. Job means, I could not possibly have committed this sin, for the destruction of God (*i.e.* inflicted by God, see *v.* 3) is a terror to me (*i.e.* dreaded by me as a just and sure retribution), and before His Majesty I could not hold out, *i.e.* I should be incapable of committing sin. Thus Dillmann. Other critics explain the verse somewhat differently, "for terror would have come upon me, and destruction from God justly, nor could I have borne up against His highness."

24. *gold my hope*] Job thus anticipates St Paul in representing the love of gold as idolatry. This is not a crime which has been laid to his charge by his friends; his conscience, probably more enlightened than theirs, warned him of a danger, which to them may have seemed trifling. See note ch. ii. 11, on the name Eliphaz.

25. *If I rejoiced*] A very remarkable saying, one which goes far beyond any recorded of early saints.

26 If I beheld †the sun when it shined, or the moon walking †*in* brightness;
† Heb. *the light.* † Heb. *bright.*

27 And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or †my mouth hath kissed my hand:
† Heb. *my hand hath kissed my mouth.*

28 This also *were* an iniquity *to be punished by* the judge: for I should have denied the God *that is* above.

29 If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him:

30 Neither have I suffered †my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.
† Heb. *my palate.*

31 If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.

32 The stranger did not lodge in the street: *but* I opened my doors ¹to the traveller.
¹ Or, *to the way.*

33 If I covered my transgressions ¹as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom:
¹ Or, *after the manner of men.*

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26. *the sun*] Job notices no other form of idolatry. Image worship, the adoration of Baal, Astarte, or of Deities known in very early times to the Israelites, may or may not have been known to him, but it evidently did not come in his way; none of his friends allude to the possibility of his having been guilty of it; the only thing, which he does conceive as possible, is that he may have been secretly moved by the glory of the two great lights to see in them Deities, or visible representation of the Deity. Kissing the hand as a token of admiration and worship was an early and common practice in Syria. Ewald supposes that we have here a reference to the spread of the Zoroastrian worship, which may have been known to the Israelites in the 7th century A.C.; but that religion does not recognize the Sun and Moon as objects of adoration, while the cult of the stars, and more especially of the two great lights, belongs to the very oldest superstitions in the world. It is anterior even to the very oldest of the Vedas, and common in Egypt from the earliest times. On the Israelitish cult see note on 2 K. xvii. 16.

28. *to be punished by the judge*] From this it is clear that, in the country and in the age of Job, star-worship was legally punishable. This might be expected among the descendants of Abraham and in the community to which Job belonged, in which the principle of monotheism was undoubtedly retained.

denied] Such idolatry is practical atheism. Job knew that God claims all the heart: the sentence of the judge is thus confirmed by conscience.

29. *rejoiced at the destruction*] Here again we have a remarkable superiority of moral character. To find an exact parallel we must turn to the New Testament: for, though the passage of Proverbs, xvii. 5, is in the same strain, it does not mention enemies; and the feeling was scarcely known to the Israelite: cf. Ps. iii. 7, xviii. 40. Job does not say, "of him whom I hated," but "of him who hated me," as though hate could not find place in his own heart: cf. Matt. v. 23.

30. *my mouth*] Lit. palate, as organ of speech; but with reference to discrimination, as in ch. vi. 30.

by wishing a curse, &c.] Or, **by demanding his life with a curse**, or imprecation.

31. The sense of this verse is somewhat obscured. It may be rendered, **If the men of my tent could not say, "who can point out one not satisfied with his meat?"** *i.e.* shew us one person who has not been liberally entertained by Job. He is not here alluding to almsgiving, but to hospitable reception of all neighbours on festive occasions, when animals were sacrificed and eaten. The reading is perhaps open to doubt: the LXX. omit *not* (לא).

32. *I opened my doors to the traveller*] Instead of shutting himself up in an inaccessible fortress, like most eastern nobles in half-settled districts, Job's house was on the wayside (ὁδῷ ἐπὶ οἰκιαναίων), and his gates always open. It is a leading precept in the 'Mishna, "Let thy house be open to the street." 'Pirke Aboth,' § 5.

We should expect to find the last clauses, *vv.* 38—40, introduced here; they are closely connected with the passage, and follow naturally in the train of thought. Job is reviewing his duties as a great proprietor; he passes from that of hospitality to that of strict justice to neighbouring landowners. It appears probable that an early copyist omitted these verses in their proper place, and inserted them afterwards. Merx comes to the same conclusion.

The last point, (supposing the correctness of the preceding observation,) with which Job naturally, and most fittingly, concludes this process of self-examination touches his conduct, when, through weakness, inadvertence, or natural sinfulness, he may have committed any transgression. The two verses may be translated somewhat more accurately (see note on *v.* 34):

34 Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, *and* went not out of the door?

35 Oh that one would hear me! [1] behold, my desire *is*, *that* the Almighty would answer me, and *that* mine adversary had written a book.

[1] Or, *behold, my sign is that the Almighty would answer me.*

36 Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, *and* bind it *as* a crown to me.

37 I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.

38 If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof [†] complain;

[†] Heb. *weep.*

"If I had concealed my sin like Adam,
Hiding mine iniquity in my bosom,
Because I dreaded the great assembly,
Or (because) the contempt of the families (of my tribe) intimidated me,
Then had I been silent, nor had I gone out of my door."

The first clauses contain an explicit admission that he was not free from sin, which, had it been concealed, would have been iniquity; but laid bare by honest confession lost that character, and deserved pardon. The allusion to Adam is questioned, and the phrase may be rendered as in the margin, after the manner of man. But there is no reason why Job should not refer to the first great fact which shews the nature and effect of sin upon the conscience; it cannot be supposed that the history of Adam was unknown to the descendants of Abraham.

34. This verse is difficult; but the most probable interpretation is that given in the previous note. Job says that, had he been conscious of sin unconfessed and unrepented, he would have lived in constant dread of exposure; he would not have ventured to meet his countrymen in their public assemblies, and would have expected to be condemned by the families of his tribe, who would, of course, be likely, sooner or later, to discover any breach of law: those feelings would have kept him silent, a prisoner in his tent, not as now challenging inquiry, and deliberately proclaiming the justice of his cause. We have thus a point of transition to the last solemn protestation.

35, 36. The most probable rendering of these two verses, of which the general sense is clear, may be as follows: **O that I had one who would hear me! Lo, here is my signature! May the Almighty answer me! O that I had the book which my adversary had written; surely I would take it on my shoulder, and bind it as diadems upon me.** It may thus be paraphrased. Would that there were one who would hearken to my pleading; here is my own statement, fully drawn out, and attested by my own formal signature; surely the Almighty, the righteous Judge, will not leave that statement unanswered. As for the writing which my adversary would be bound to produce in court, my one wish is that I had it; far from fearing shame, from dreading conviction, I would take it and lay it on my shoulders, as a badge of honour (see Isa. ix. 6, xxii. 22), or bear it as a crown upon my head.

Two documents would be required in a full and formal investigation: the accuser's statement, drawn out previously and read in open court, and the answer of the accused with his signature. In the well-known representation of the judgment before Osiris, 'Todtenbuch,' Pl. 4, Thoth, the accuser, or advocate, stands before the throne with a scroll in his left hand, and the recording pen in his right: the person on trial stands behind holding up his hand, in attestation of innocence. From this it might perhaps be conjectured that the Hebrew word rendered "sign" may refer to a gesture, rather than to a written document. The usage, however, differed in different lands. One point is important to be noted: Egyptian monuments prove that the presentation of written documents in courts of justice belongs to earlier ages than that ascribed to Job; see 'Mél. ég.' III. p. 3. On the general use of writing see note on xix. 23.

37. *unto him*] Unto God.

the number of my steps] *i.e.* every act in the course of my life.

as a prince] With the full consciousness of inward and inalienable dignity, with kingly bearing.

near unto him] That is the crown of all, nearness to God. This appears, beyond all doubt, to be the close of Job's speech; it brings all that has been said to an absolute conclusion—every possible charge has been disposed of: Job's integrity stands clear, and he presents himself before God for judgment.

38. These verses are evidently misplaced (see last note and on *v.* 33); but they deal with a very necessary point for Job's vindication, for he had been distinctly charged with abuse of his power as owner of lands. *If my land cry out against me*, that is, if it disown me as rightful possessor, if a single furrow of it has been acquired by injustice—a fine figure not unknown to Hebrew or classical poetry, and here standing just in its right place.

† Heb. *the strength thereof.* † Heb. *caused the soul of the owners thereof to expire,* or, *breathe out.* ‖ Or, *noisome weeds.*

39 If I have eaten †the fruits thereof without money, or have †caused the owners thereof to lose their life:

40 Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and ‖cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1 *Elihu is angry with Job and his three friends.* 6 *Because wisdom cometh not from age, he excuseth the boldness of his youth.* 11 *He reproveth them for not satisfying of Job.* 16 *His zeal to speak.*

SO these three men ceased †to answer Job, because he *was* righteous in his own eyes.

† Heb. *from answering.*

2 Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job

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39. *without money*] That is, without a full right acquired by purchase.

to lose their life] Such a charge had been insinuated both by Zophar, ch. xx, and Eliphaz, ch. xxii. Job may speak of the death of the owners as a result of their expulsion, but the words are probably to be taken literally; a ruthless oppressor, as he had been assumed to be, would clear his lands by the extermination of their former owners.

40. *The words of Job are ended*] Job thus ends his own part in the colloquy. He has silenced all his opponents, and waits for an answer from the Almighty.

XXXII.—XXXVII.

These chapters contain the discourse of Elihu, a new interlocutor. The actual position of the disputants was unsatisfactory. Job had not only maintained his piety and integrity, but had *imputed to God unrighteousness* in His dealings; his opponents, on the other hand, had first insinuated, and then openly declared, that his calamities were a necessary and just punishment for wickedness, which they assumed, but were unable to prove. They had broken the law of charity, Job had trenched upon the reverence due to God. One point was common both to Job and his adversaries, they looked upon his afflictions as indications and results of God's wrath. Their doctrinal system left no place for any other conclusion, the only difference being that they considered the case against Job complete without any other proof whatever, whereas Job represents the ways of the Almighty as altogether incomprehensible. The aspirations, and even hopes, which he entertained of a future vindication, being without objective grounds, and resting altogether on inward convictions, had been disregarded by them, and even Job himself omits all notice of them in his final summary of the argument. At this crisis Elihu comes in; he has a different theory to propose. The divine chastisements have a loving purpose. They are intended to awaken a man's conscience, and to save him from destruction, they make him feel the want of a mediator, and prepare him for spiritual ministrations, which, if received in humility, give him right views of God's righteousness, bring him into a state of reconciliation, restore him his righteousness, and save him "from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." From this general principle Elihu proceeds, in chap. xxxiv., to prove that it is impossible, from the very nature of things, that God the supreme Almighty Ruler should be unjust, and that such imputations as those which Job had advanced involve very serious guilt: instead of humility his afflictions had but taught him pride; hence the silence of God; had Job prayed he would have been heard, but he had spoken in vain, and multiplied words without a true knowledge of God's purposes. Job's only right course is to listen to God's teaching, and to magnify His work, for His Being is unsearchable, and man's wisdom is but foolishness in His sight.

The general structure of the discourse is thus tolerably clear, but it is exceedingly obscure in details; the arguments are for the most part rather suggested than worked out, the language is full of difficulties, and in numerous passages interpreters are wholly at fault. Partly for these reasons, and partly on account of certain peculiarities of style, which are held to indicate a different age from the rest of this book, the whole section containing this discourse has been rejected as spurious by a very considerable number of critics. The question has been discussed in the Introduction, and various points bearing upon it will be noticed in the following commentary. Merx leaves this section untouched.

CHAP. XXXII. 2. *Elihu*] The name means "He is my God," his father's name Barachel, "God blesseth," or "bless, O God:" both names are significant, but not on that account unhistorical; they prove that the speaker belonged to a family which had retained the knowledge of the God of heaven and earth.

the Buzite] Buz and Uz were the two sons of Nahor, Abraham's brother. The Buzites are mentioned at a later period by Jeremiah (xxv. 23) in conjunction with Dedan and Tema. The family of Ram, to which Elihu belonged, is unknown save from this notice. The name is probably connected with Aram. The language of Elihu is more strongly marked by Aramaic forms than any part of the

was his wrath kindled, because he justified † himself rather than God.

† Heb. *his soul.*

3 Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and *yet* had condemned Job.

4 Now Elihu had † waited till Job had spoken, because they *were* † elder than he.

† Heb. *expected Job in words.* † Heb. *elder for days.*

5 When Elihu saw that *there was* no answer in the mouth of *these* three men, then his wrath was kindled.

6 And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I *am* † young, and ye *are* very old; wherefore I was afraid, and † durst not shew you mine opinion.

† Heb. *few of days.* † Heb. *feared.*

7 I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

8 But *there is* a spirit in man: and *a* the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

a ch. 38. 36. Prov. 2. 6. Eccles. 2. 26. Dan. 1. 17. & 2. 21.

9 Great men are not *always* wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.

10 Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.

11 Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your † reasons, whilst ye searched out † what to say.

† Heb. *understandings.* † Heb. *words.*

12 Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, *there was* none of you that convinced Job, *or* that answered his words:

13 Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.

14 Now he hath not ‖ directed *his* words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

‖ Or, *ordered his words.*

15 They were amazed, they answered no more: † they left off speaking.

† Heb. *they removed speeches from themselves.*

16 When I had waited, (for they

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book, a fact variously accounted for by commentators, but which harmonizes with this notice of his origin.

because he justified, &c.] This judgment is undoubtedly true, and probably expresses the feeling of the writer of the book. Elihu was not indignant that Job had justified himself, but that in vindicating his own integrity he had charged God with injustice: thus in xl. 8, God Himself asks Job, Wilt thou condemn Me that thou mayest be righteous?

3. *and yet had condemned Job*] The word "yet" is inserted under the impression that Elihu was angry because they had condemned Job without being able to prove his guilt (thus too Ew., Hirz.): but the passage more probably means, they had found no answer, and therefore had not convicted Job of wrongful accusation of God. Elihu's own object is to prove that God is righteous, and that Job is guilty of great sin in opposing His judgment.

4. *waited till Job had spoken*] Or, **awaited Job with words**, sc. which he had long wished to utter, an indication rather of impatience, than of modesty; a different Hebrew word is used in *v.* 11.

6. *shew you mine opinion*] Or, to **utter what I know in your presence.** The tone of the original is at once less boastful, and more confident than the A.V. Elihu does not speak of his opinion, but of what he knows, an inward conviction which it is his duty to utter. Cf. chap. xxxiii. 3; Ps. xix. 2; where the same words are rendered "sheweth knowledge."

8. The verse may be rendered **Truly it is the Spirit in man, and the breath of God, which giveth him** (*i.e.* **man collectively) understanding.** Elihu doubts not that the inward impulse, which moves him to speak, comes direct from God. Bp. Wordsworth compares Joseph, Gen. xl. 8, and Daniel, ii. 20.

10. *I also*] Even I, young as I am, and but for that impulse unworthy to be heard.

11, 12. Elihu describes the gradual change of his feelings while he listened; first, curiosity, then suppressed impatience while they were hunting out arguments, then indignation at their failure.

13. The connection of this verse with the context is questioned: it may be, I assert this to anticipate your answer, for you may say we have found out wisdom, ascertained and declared the truth, and though we have not convinced Job, that was owing to his hardness, God will overthrow him and not man. Or more probably, You must not then say we have found wisdom, since we proved his guilt by the simple fact that God punishes him. In the latter case no change is required in the translation, which is supported by the Vulg., Syr., Arab. and Targ. The LXX. is unintelligible.

14. *against me*] *i.e.* against my view. Elihu gives two reasons why he should speak; (a) the arguments of Job had not touched the position which he intended to occupy; and (b) the arguments which he was about to use had not occurred to the other speakers.

spake not, but stood still, *and* answered no more;)

17 *I said*, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.

18 For I am full of †matter, †the spirit within me constraineth me.

† Heb. *words.*
† Heb. *the spirit of my belly.*

19 Behold, my belly *is* as wine *which* †hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.

† Heb. *is not opened.*

20 I will speak, †that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

† Heb. *that I may breathe.*

21 Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

22 For I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my maker would soon take me away.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1 *Elihu offereth himself instead of God, with sincerity and meekness, to reason with Job.* 8 *He excuseth God from giving man an account of his ways, by his greatness.* 14 *God calleth man to repentance by visions,* 19 *by afflictions,* 23 *and by his ministry.* 31 *He inciteth Job to attention.*

WHEREFORE, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

2 Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken †in my mouth.

† Heb. *in my palate.*

3 My words *shall be of* the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

4 The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

5 If thou canst answer me, set *thy words* in order before me, stand up.

6 [a]Behold, I *am* †according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am †formed out of the clay.

[a] chap. 9. 35. & 13. 20.
† Heb. *according to thy mouth.*
† Heb. *cut out of the clay.*

7 Behold, my terror shall not make

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18. *I am full of matter*] Or **words**: the expression indicates genuine and irrepressible convictions: cf. Ps. xxxix. 3, 4.

19. *belly*] In Hebrew physiology the heart is regarded as the seat of intelligence, the entrails or bowels, of yearnings, the belly, of spiritual emotions. The word means simply "the inward part." See note on ch. xv. 2. It is important to keep this in mind, as it is difficult to divest ourselves of unpleasant associations, and do justice to the true feelings of the speaker.

like new bottles] See Matth. ix. 17, a passage of which this is an excellent illustration; the inward struggle of spiritual emotions has a striking analogy in the process of fermentation. Compare also Acts ii. 13.

20. *may be refreshed*] Or as in the margin, **breathe**, he is well-nigh suffocated by the struggle. In all this there is no real exaggeration; the feeling must be known to all who have listened to partial or false defences of doctrinal truth.

21. Continued silence would imply a deference to mere human authority, a meanness and subserviency which God would punish. See xiii. 8. In the two clauses Elihu uses different words for "man," equivalent to "vir" and "homo," here, however, not as distinguishing, but as including all. Cf. Gesen. s.v. Adam, § 3.

So far we have a vigorous and lively, but surely not presumptuous introduction to the discourses, which henceforth will be addressed exclusively to Job.

CHAP. XXXIII. 2. *opened my mouth*] The phrase so used always denotes careful, deliberate utterances on solemn occasions: see Note on chap. iii. 1.

in my mouth] Or **palate**; *i.e.* each word is as it were tasted; carefully examined, and approved before it is uttered by the tongue. The palate represents to the Hebrew the judgment of a sound mind, which examines a thought impartially and thoroughly before it allows it to pass the tongue. See note vi. 30. This is the first reason why Job should hearken.

3. Two additional reasons, honesty of intention, and simple straightforward earnestness of language. The latter clause should be rendered, **my lips shall speak out what I know with sincerity.**

4. The chief reason of all: because the Spirit to Whose creative act all wisdom must be ascribed, the breath of the Almighty, Which made man a living soul, now quickeneth Elihu, *i.e.* gives such life and power to his conviction that he is constrained to speak.

hath given me life] Or **quickeneth me**; see last note.

6, 7. An allusion to Job's oft-repeated wish, that God would lay aside His terrors and reason with him on equal terms. The first verse may be more accurately rendered, **Behold I, like thee, am God's creature, I also am moulded of clay.** Thus Ros. The Syriac renders the first clause, "I am as thou art with God," *i.e.* "I am in the same relation to God as thou art." Thus Hirz. and Dillm.

thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

8 Surely thou hast spoken †in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of *thy* words, *saying*,

† Heb. *in mine ears.*

9 I am clean without transgression, I *am* innocent; neither *is there* iniquity in me.

10 Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy,

11 He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.

12 Behold, *in* this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.

13 Why dost thou strive against him? for †he giveth not account of any of his matters.

† Heb. *he answereth not.*

14 For God speaketh once, yea twice, *yet man* perceiveth it not.

15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

16 Then †he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

† Heb. *he revealeth,* or, *uncovereth.*

17 That he may withdraw man *from his* †purpose, and hide pride from man.

† Heb. *work.*

18 He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life †from perishing by the sword.

† Heb. *from passing by the sword.*

19 He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain:*

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7. *my hand*] My **burden** shall not be heavy upon thee. The word in Arabic means a heavy load, and metaphorically "oppression." Schult., Ges., &c. Cf. x. 2, xiii. 21, 22, &c.

8. The expressions indicate great astonishment: "I could scarcely believe my ears, but there could be no mistake; thou saidst it loudly, I heard it distinctly."

words] The Hebrew is archaic and Aramaic; see *v.* 1, note.

9—11. Elihu is justified in these statements, see ix. 21, xii. 4, xvi. 17, and numerous other passages; but he does little justice to Job's real inward conviction and frequent declarations, that he is conscious of natural sinfulness and many transgressions.

10. *enemy*] Elihu sums up in one word the substance of Job's reiterated complaints, that God dealt with him as an enemy.

12. *that God is greater than man*] This rendering is literal; it is supported by the Vulg., Syr., Targ.; and is defended by Dillmann. Another explanation, however, seems preferable: "I will answer thee, for God is too great to be questioned by man."

13. *strive*] *i.e.* propose to contend against Him as an adversary in a court of justice. See note xxxi. 35, and ch. xiii. 3, xvi. 21.

he giveth not &c.] The expression presents some difficulties. The meaning appears to be, Why dost thou complain against Him, because He does not declare any of His purposes in answer to you? Such a complaint is presumptuous; God is not bound to give any account to man, and yet He gives clear intimations to those who attend to them: see next verse.

14. Elihu now states, for the first time, what he really holds. God does not condescend to answer irreverent appeals, but He speaks distinctly, and, if necessary, repeatedly by His judgments, though men fail to understand their import.

15. The first process by which God makes His will known. He wakens the conscience by inward communications in the dead silence of night, when man communes with his heart alone with God.

16. Then God opens or uncovers their ears, *i.e.* opens their minds to spiritual truth; and sealeth their instruction, or **chastisement.** "To seal" in scriptural language means to complete, or to appropriate, or to declare an appropriation. Here it means that God makes the man feel from Whom and for what purpose chastisement is sent.

17. The real object is one of love, not of wrath, as Job and his opponents had throughout assumed. The chastisement is intended to make a man give up some wrong purpose, and to put away all pride.

purpose] Lit. work, often taken in a bad sense, as facinus. Cf. 1 Sam. xx. 19; Ps. xxviii. 4. Two words are used for man, as in *v.* 21; here, however, in the second clause the word implies strength.

hide pride] The expression is peculiar: it may mean to *cover* pride, so that it may not tempt a man; thus Hirzel: Dillmann objects to the construction, but it is supported by xxiii. 17.

18. The result is that God preserves man from the destruction into which he must otherwise have fallen.

from perishing] Or "passing away by the sword." This rendering is probably correct, but many critics follow the Vulg. "that it pass not on the sword." Cf. xxxvi. 12.

19—22. Elihu takes a second case: that of a man heavily afflicted; one suffering like

b Ps. 107. 18.
† Heb. *meat of desire*.

20 [b]So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul †dainty meat.

21 His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones *that* were not seen stick out.

22 Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

23 If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:

24 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found [1]a ransom.

1 Or, *an atonement*.

Job himself, and shews that here also the object is a loving one.

19. *and the multitude of his bones*] Our version adopts the reading of the Masoretic revision; which is defended by some critics in the sense, while his bones are complete, full of vigour. This seems somewhat harsh. The old text gives a stronger meaning, "and with continuous struggles," *i.e.* anguish, of his bones. Thus Del., Dill. In this and in the following verses Elihu refers to Job's own description, xxx. 17.

21. *that it cannot be seen*] Or, "out of sight:" a phrase which may mean so that none can bear to look at it: as in Isaiah, liii. 2, 3. See Note below.

22. *the destroyers*] *i.e.* death and his attendants and precursors, the pangs preceding dissolution. Many commentators suppose that Elihu speaks of the angels who inflict death upon those who do not obey God's premonitory warnings. This gives a forcible sense, is justified by many Scriptural statements (see 2 S. xxiv. 16, 17; Ps. lxxviii. 49), and suits the context.

23. The exact meaning of this passage, by far the most important in Elihu's discourse, is much disputed. The word "messenger" is nearly always rendered "angel," and even when (as in Mal. iii. 1) our version has "messenger," it is in the sense of a divine Being, the Messenger of the Covenant. There is no reason to suppose that it has another sense in this passage, where all the old versions have "angel." The office of the angels is to execute God's purposes, and they are sent forth to minister to His people. So far Dillmann and most later critics agree. Dillmann argues "that this is not a human messenger, but an angel, follows from his office, *v.* 24; from the contrast with the destroyers, *v.* 22; and from the words unto *man*, *v.* 23." One angel, however, stands apart from all others in the Old Testament; His office, rank, and apparently His nature, are represented as peculiar, He bears the Holy name; and whether Elihu or other Patriarchs felt the full significance of their own words or not, they use no expressions which are unsuitable to the true and only Mediator. The objection that the expression is misplaced in the mouth of Elihu, an Aramæan, has no weight. The angel of the Lord was known to the Patriarchs. See note on Gen. xxii. 11, and on xxxii. 24. To suppose, with some commentators, whose excellent judgment was obscured by a doctrinal bias, that Elihu speaks of some man, perhaps even of himself, as entrusted with such an office, seems groundless and unreasonable.

an interpreter] The word expresses the office of the angel, in Gen. xlii. 23; it means an interpreter in the literal sense, in other passages an ambassador, (2 Chro. xxxii. 31) or a teacher (Isai. xliii. 27), a prophet whose duty it is to announce God's will; the general and true notion is that expressed by the word interpreter, a mediator, not, however, in the sense of daysman or arbitrator, but of one who makes known the will of the superior. The Jewish prayers shew that the Interpreter was always identified in their minds with the expected Redeemer of Israel; thus, "Raise up for us the righteous Interpreter, say I have found a ransom." The whole passage is quoted at the sacrifice offered still in many countries of Europe on the eve of the great day of atonement. See Wünsche, 'Die Leiden des Messias,' 1870, pp. 17—19.

one among a thousand] Not one among a thousand, but one who among a thousand (*i.e.* an indefinite number, the whole body of angels) has no equal; cf. Song of S. v. 10. Holy Scripture knows but one such divine Mediator. The LXX. take "one of a thousand" to mean one angel favourable among a thousand destroyers: thus too the Targ. which, however, uses the word "paraclete." There can be little doubt that such interpretation is incorrect.

to shew unto man his uprightness] *i.e.* the right way by which he may be delivered from sin and death, the way of repentance and faith.

24. *then he*, God, *is gracious*, and he, sc. the angel, saith. The A.V. takes God to be the subject of the second clause, but the words are evidently those of the Mediator.

a ransom] The word so interpreted means that which covers sin, and saves the sinner from its penalty: hence a ransom or atonement. See note on Ex. xxv. 17, Vol. I. p. 368. The messenger, who interposes between God and the object of chastisement, has one object, to save him from destruction: Elihu evidently speaks of a propitiatory offering; in whatever form that may be provided,

25 His flesh shall be fresher † than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth:

26 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy. for he will render unto man his righteousness.

27 ‖ He looketh upon men, and *if any* say, I have sinned, and perverted *that which was* right, and it profited me not;

28 ‖ He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

29 Lo, all these *things* worketh God † oftentimes with man,

30 To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

31 Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.

32 If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee.

33 If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

† Heb. *than childhood.*
‖ Or, *He shall look upon men, and say, I have sinned, &c.*
‖ Or, *He hath delivered my soul, &c. and my life.*
† Heb. *twice and thrice.*

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he is sure that when the great angel intervenes the reconciliation must be effected. We have a true, though it may be an undeveloped, anticipation of the truth afterwards revealed.

25. *His flesh shall be fresher*] Cf. 2 K. v. 14. Elihu speaks, of course, of the restoration to perfect health, when the affliction, under the influence of the mediator, has done its work; but his words are singularly suggestive of the higher truths made known to us by the true Mediator.

26. The prayer, of which Elihu now speaks, is that which is offered by man after his restoration to God's favour.

his righteousness] The expression is ambiguous: here it may mean, when a man is thus in a state of grace God will reward him for his righteous conversation; or, more probably, God will again regard and treat him as a righteous man.

27. The marginal rendering is better than that in the text, but does not give the exact meaning. The two verses have this sense: **He** (that is, the restored penitent) **will sing unto men, and say, I had sinned and perverted that which was right, and it was not requited to me: He redeemed my soul from passing into the pit,** (cf. *vv.* 18, 24), **and my life beholdeth the light with joy.** See Note below.

29—30. One object of divine dispensations is thus stated with equal truth and beauty. It does not reach Job's case exactly; for we know that his affliction was intended to try once for all the question whether goodness can be perfectly disinterested; but Elihu has done what he promised, suggesting a train of thought at once quite distinct from that of the other teachers, and full of comfort and support to all in affliction.

29. *oftentimes*] Or in two, three visitations: if the first warning is unheard there is a second, or, if necessary, a third visitation: cf. *v.* 14.

31—33. These words seem to indicate the effect of the discourse on Job. He may at first have shewn some desire to answer, yet feeling that after all the argument was really new, and brought with it some comfort, he may have refrained. Elihu says, doubtless with truth, that he desired, if it were possible, to justify Job, and to free him from the cruel imputations of those who without proof had condemned him; but that now seems quite out of the question, since Job will not accede to his representation. In the next chapter he proceeds to shew that Job has incurred real and very serious guilt by his conduct under the loving chastisement.

NOTES on CHAP. XXXIII. 21 and 27.

21. *and his bones*, &c.] The Hebrew is not clear, but the older reading (the Cethib) probably means, and his bones waste away and disappear. The A.V. follows the Vulg. Ossa quæ tecta fuerant nudabuntur. LXX. καὶ ἀποδείξῃ τὰ ὀστᾶ αὐτοῦ κενά. If לא be omitted this may express the meaning, "and the bareness of his bones is seen:" *i.e.* his bones are bared to the sight.

27. The amendments are all but certain. ישר from שיר = שור, sing, especially a song of praise and thanksgiving. Ges., Dill. ולא שוה, "and there was no equivalent," Vulg. "ut eram dignus non recepi:" thus LXX. Ges., &c. In *v.* 28, חיתי, Cethib, LXX. ψυχήν μου. ראה ב invariably means "to look with joy on."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1 *Elihu accuseth Job for charging God with injustice.* 10 *God omnipotent cannot be unjust.* 31 *Man must humble himself unto God.* 34 *Elihu reproveth Job.*

FURTHERMORE Elihu answered and said,

2 Hear my words, O ye wise *men;* and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

3 [a] For the ear trieth words, as the [†] mouth tasteth meat.

4 Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what *is* good.

5 For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.

6 Should I lie against my right? [†] my wound *is* incurable without transgression.

7 What man *is* like Job, *who* drinketh up scorning like water?

8 Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

9 For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.

10 Therefore hearken unto me, ye [†] men of understanding: [b] far be it from God, *that he should do* wickedness; and *from* the Almighty, *that he should commit* iniquity.

11 [c] For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to *his* ways.

12 Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

13 Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed [†] the whole world?

14 [d] If he set his heart [†] upon man, *if* he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

[a] ch. 12. 11.
† Heb. *palate.*
† Heb. *mine arrow.*
† Heb. *men of heart.*
[b] Deut. 32. 4. ch. 8. 3. & 36. 23. Ps. 92. 15. Rom. 9. 14.
[c] Ps. 62. 12. Prov. 24. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Ezek. 33. 20. Mat. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 22. 12.
† Heb. *all of it?*
[d] Ps. 104. 29.
† Heb. *upon him.*

CHAP. XXXIV. 2. *O ye wise men*] Elihu addresses these words either to the bystanders, or generally to men of sound judgment. If, as some suppose, they were addressed to Job and his three friends, there would be a touch of irony quite out of keeping with the earnestness of the speaker.

3. *mouth*] Literally as in the margin, "palate;" see note on xxxiii. 1.

4. *judgment*] A sound upright judgment: cf. 1 Thess. v. 21, where "prove" exactly expresses the force of the word "choose."

5. See xiii. 18, xxiii. 10, xxvii. 2. Elihu represents Job's argument quite correctly.

6. Job had repeatedly declared that it would be sheer hypocrisy and deceit to confess that he had merited such punishment.

my wound] Lit. "arrow," as in ch. vi. 4.

without transgression] *i.e.* although he had committed no transgression. Upon the theory of Elihu, not less than that of the three friends, this position was at once untenable and offensive. Whether the blow was inflicted in wrath or in love it implied pride, or perversity in the sufferer; see ch. xxxiii. 17, and 27.

7. A strong assertion that Job had given way to his feelings without restraint, that instead of shrinking from the temptation, he had greedily absorbed the bitter draught of scorn. Cf. xv. 16. Elihu goes now, for the first time, far beyond the truth. There was bitterness, even fierceness in Job's remonstrances, but the words were wrung from him by agony and by the taunts of his unfriendly counsellors; his scorn was altogether directed against them, not, as Elihu seems to assume, against God.

8. *goeth in company*] *i.e.* adopts their principles and arguments. Cf. Ps. i. 1: the word "wicked" is never used save of utterly godless men; Elihu does not apply it directly to Job himself.

9. See ch. ix. 22, xxi. 7, xxiv. 1, and other passages, stating or implying the same thing. Elihu, however, does scanty justice to Job, who repeatedly asserts that such facts are matters of perplexity, not that they really represent the principles of the divine government; cf. xxiv. 1, xxvii. 11.

10-12. Elihu first lays down the simple proposition that the Almighty is just in all His dealings. He then proceeds to prove it.

13—15. The first proof is the absoluteness of God's government. "Who hath given him a charge?" The inference to be drawn is that God administers the government out of His own free will; He is not, like the subordinate deities of the heathen, merely in possession of a delegated authority; He has none to consult: when we reach Him we reach the last, highest, absolute source of all justice.

14. *upon man*] The word "man" is not in the Hebrew, which gives, as in the margin, upon him; and the most probable, though not undisputed, meaning is, If God set His heart upon Himself (*i.e.* regarded Himself only, were not full of love to His creatures),

[e Eccles. 12. 7. Gen. 3. 19.] 15 [e] All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

16 If now *thou hast* understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.

17 Shall even he that hateth right † govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just? [† Heb. bind?]

18 *Is it fit* to say to a king, *Thou art* wicked? *and* to princes, *Ye are* ungodly?

19 *How much less to him* that [f] accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all *are* the work of his hands. [f Deut. 10. 17. 2 Chron. 19. 7. Acts 10. 34. Rom. 2. 11. Gal. 2. 6. Ephes. 6. 9. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17.]

20 In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and † the mighty shall be taken away without hand. [† Heb. they shall take away the mighty.]

21 [g] For his eyes *are* upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. [g 2 Chron. 16. 9. Prov. 5. 21. & 15. 3. ch. 31. 4. Jer. 16. 17.]

22 *There is* no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

23 For he will not lay upon man more *than right;* that he should † enter into judgment with God. [† Heb. go.]

24 He shall break in pieces mighty men † without number, and set others in their stead. [† Heb. without searching out.]

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if He should gather to Himself His spirit and His breath, suspend the emanations of His quickening love, then all would perish at once: cf. Ps. civ. 29. Thus Dillmann, Hahn, Bp. Wordsworth, and others. Our version would give the opposite sense: If God set His heart upon man, that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, regarded him with enmity, then all would perish: thus Vulg., Targ., Ros., Del. The argument is evidently that, where absolute power coexists with unselfish love, injustice is impossible.

16—30. The second proof is, that, as a matter of fact, God deals with all men impartially; princes and people, rich and poor, are alike in His sight; none of their works escape Him; He overthrows the powerful oppressor, hears the cry of the afflicted, and overthrows the hypocrite. This passage is exceedingly obscure, full of grammatical difficulties, and the thoughts are somewhat confused. In fact, Elihu's argument here is not new; it has been partly anticipated by Job's friends, and far more broadly and strongly stated by Job himself: at the same time, there is so much reverence, so deep a conviction that God's Almightiness and Omniscience are essentially one with Righteousness, that the address is calculated to prepare Job for the final manifestation of God Himself.

17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?*] Or, **What! doth He hating right govern?** The question implies that the combination of supreme power and injustice is inconceivable. Renan, "un être qui haïrait la justice pourrait-il gouverner le monde?" Elihu addresses himself to a sure, instinctive conviction, which cannot mislead; in fact, no one who believes in God's omnipotence seriously questions His justice. See ch. viii. 3; Gen. xviii. 25; Rom. iii. 5, 6.

most just] Or, **the just, the mighty;** sc. in Whom might and justice are one.

18—20. The impartiality of God.

18. If a subject would be guilty of treason (læsæ majestatis) who accused his king, or the king's representatives, of corruption and injustice, what must be the guilt of thus accusing the King of kings, Him by Whom kings and princes themselves are regarded in the same light as the poorest of His creatures? Cf. Exod. xxii. 28.

20. *shall they die*] Or, **they die.** Elihu refers to the general course of Divine government, which subjects all God's creatures to an impartial doom.

troubled] Overthrown, as by an earthquake, suddenly and unexpectedly.

at midnight] See Exod. xi. 4, xii. 29, 30; and compare ch. xxxvi. 20.

without hand] *i.e.* without human agency; cf. Dan. ii. 34, 45, viii. 25; Lam. iv. 6.

21—23. The omniscience of God. The inference is given in the third verse; since He knows exactly all a man's works He will not impose on any one more than is due to him, so as to give him the right, which Job has claimed, of contending with his Judge. The 23rd verse, however, may be rendered more accurately thus: **For He,** God, **will not regard a man twice, in order to bring him to judgment**: lit. "again that he should come before God for judgment." The verse is thus connected with the following clauses.

23—30. The completeness and suddenness of God's judgments, their objects and results. On 23, see preceding note.

24. *He shall break......without number*] Or, **He breaketh the mighty without searching;** without any investigation, such as Job had called for. The whole cause **is** before Him, He decides without such a process as is necessary in human judgments.

25 Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* in the night, so that they are †destroyed.

26 He striketh them as wicked men † in the open sight of others;

27 Because they turned back † from him, and would not consider any of his ways:

28 So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

29 When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth *his* face, who then can behold him? whether *it be done* against a nation, or against a man only:

30 That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.

31 Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne *chastisement*, I will not offend *any more*:

32 *That which* I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

33 † *Should it be* according to thy mind? he will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.

34 Let men † of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

35 Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom.

36 ‖ My desire *is that* Job may be tried unto the end because of *his* answers for wicked men.

37 For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth *his hands* among us, and multiplieth his words against God.

† Heb. *crushed.*
† Heb. *in the place of beholders.*
† Heb. *from after him.*
† Heb. Should it be *from with thee?*
† Heb. *of heart.*
‖ Or, *My father let Job be tried.*

CHAPTER XXXV.

1 *Comparison is not to be made with God, because our good or evil cannot extend unto him.* 9 *Many cry in their afflictions, but are not heard for want of faith.*

ELIHU spake moreover, and said,

2 Thinkest thou this to be right,

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26. *as wicked men*] *i.e.* as convicted malefactors.

in the open sight of others] Literally, in the place of beholders, *i.e.* publicly, where their punishment is seen.

28. *So that they cause*] A very forcible expression, as though it were the object, as it is the effect, of their injustice, to call in the intervention of God. Cf. James v. 4.

he heareth] Hence it follows that even those terrible judgments, which are inflicted without any process of inquiry, are a result of God's love.

30. The Hebrew is obscure; but our version on the whole probably gives the true meaning.

31—37. From these considerations Elihu draws the conclusion that Job has no course open but to bear his chastisement, promise amendment, ask for instruction, and do no more iniquity. He then claims the honour of having really convicted Job, and winds up this set of arguments with a wish that the trial may continue until the issue is complete

33. Here again it is hard to ascertain the exact connection of thought. It may probably be this: "Shall God recompense (*i.e.* proceed in judgment) according to thy will? (Job's expressions of dissatisfaction with God's judgments justify the question.) For thou hast despised His judgment, but thou hast to choose, not I;" *i.e.* the object of the whole trial is to bring Job to a right mind; it is for him, not for a mere bystander, to answer the question whether he will accept God's judgment or abide by his own opinions: "therefore speak what thou knowest," sc. what is the conclusion to which you deliberately adhere?

34, 35. Elihu can get no answer from Job; he pauses, and then adds, **Men of heart, and the wise man who hears me, will say to me, Job doth not speak with knowledge, and his words are not in wisdom.**

35. *hath spoken*, &c.] Elihu assumes that he carries with him the conviction of all men of understanding.

36. *because of his answers for wicked men*] *i.e.* such as wicked men only would give.

36, 37. Since Job will not give way, Elihu feels that he has no alternative but to wish that the trial may go on until it has done its work. Harsh as the words are, they are not without some justification. Elihu, of course, could not see into Job's heart, and his offence at the tone of Job's expostulations was natural. His own conviction that all chastisements proceed from love necessarily involved the condemnation of one who could see in them nothing but indications of enmity.

CHAP. XXXV. Elihu proceeds to deal with the assertion that a life of righteousness had brought Job no corresponding blessings;

that thou saidst, My righteousness *is* more than God's?

3 For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? *and*, What profit shall I have, [1] *if I be cleansed* from my sin?

4 [†] I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee.

5 Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds *which* are higher than thou.

6 If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or *if* thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?

7 [a] If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?

8 Thy wickedness *may hurt* a man as thou *art;* and thy righteousness *may profit* the son of man.

9 By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make *the oppressed* to cry: they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.

10 But none saith, Where *is* God my maker, who giveth songs in the night;

11 Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

12 There they cry, but none giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men.

13 [b] Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

14 Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, *yet* judgment *is* before him; therefore trust thou in him.

15 But now, because *it is* not *so*, [1] he hath visited in his anger; yet

[1] Or, by it *more than by my sin?*
[†] Heb. *I will return to thy words.*
[a] ch. 22. 3. Ps. 16. 2. Rom. 11. 35.
[b] ch. 27. 9. Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11.
[1] That is, *God.*

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he argues that man's righteousness constitutes no claim upon God, 1—8; and that when God disregards appeals to His justice it is because they are urged without humility and faith, 9—13; hence the duty of submitting to Him with full trust in His justice.

2. *My righteousness is more than God's*] The A. V. represents Elihu as drawing a strong and hardly fair inference from Job's statements that his own righteousness had not been recognized: thus also the Vulg. The LXX., however, renders the clause, "I am just before God:" a statement true in itself, and a possible interpretation of the Hebrew. Thus Dillm., who shews the connection with the following verses: does that righteousness consist in arguments like these?

3. The latter clause is rightly given in the margin. **What do I gain** (from righteousness) **more than** (I should have gained) **from sinning?** Thus Ew., Dillm., &c. Cf. ix. 22; xxii. 15.

4. *thy companions*] *i.e.* the three friends, whose arguments Elihu has undertaken to confute or amend: xxxii. 5—17.

6—8. The drift of this is that there is no such relation between God and man as to make happiness a reward due to righteousness. When granted, it is a matter of favour and grace; when withdrawn, complaints imply a wrong conception of our position before God.

9—12. Elihu touches the more difficult question, why the cry of the oppressed is often unanswered.

9. *they make the oppressed to cry*] Or, **men groan.**

10. The reason is given; it is because men who suffer do not pray aright; God giveth songs in the night; the truly pious man, instead of groaning, sings hymns of praise in his deep affliction: thus at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God in the prison at Philippi, Acts xvi. 25. Cf. Ps. xxii. 2, lxxvii. 6.

11. *more than*] God's dealings teach man higher lessons than can be received by brutes, who express their natural and instinctive feelings when they suffer. This may refer to Job's reasoning in ch. vi. 5. Elihu has, however, in mind the thought expressed in such passages as Ps. civ. 21 and cxlvii. 9, where the lions are said to seek their meat from God, and the young ravens to cry to Him. The clause may perhaps be rendered, "by means of the beasts...and fowls;" in which case Elihu takes up Job's words, xii. 7.

12. *There they cry*] There, *i.e.* in that state of mind, without piety and faith, so that, although they really suffer wrong, their cry is but vanity, and is therefore disregarded; cf. James iv. 3. Elihu thus meets the reiterated complaints of Job that his cry is unanswered.

14. A further answer to the complaint that Job cannot see God; the cause is before Him, and Job has only to wait for His sentence. In the last words Elihu apparently refers, not without bitterness, to Job's own declaration, xiii. 15.

‖ That is, *Job.*

‖ he knoweth *it* not in great extremity:

16 Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1 *Elihu sheweth how God is just in his ways.* 16 *How Job's sins hinder God's blessings.* 24 *God's works are to be magnified.*

ELIHU also proceeded, and said,

2 Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee † that *I have* yet to speak on God's behalf.

† Heb. *that there are yet words for God.*

3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

4 For truly my words *shall* not *be* false: he that is perfect in knowledge *is* with thee.

5 Behold, God *is* mighty, and despiseth not *any: he is* mighty in strength *and* † wisdom.

† Heb. *heart.*

6 He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the ‖ poor.

‖ Or, *afflicted.*

7 [a] He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings *are they* on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

a Ps. 34. 15.

15, 16. This difficult passage may be rendered somewhat differently: "And now, because God hath not punished his (Job's) anger, and doth not regard his insolence greatly, therefore doth Job, &c." In other words, Job's impious charges simply prove that he has not yet suffered sufficiently. Or the connection of thought may be, "And now, because God hath not visited Job in wrath, as he deserved, and hath not taken full account of his insolence, his spirit is unbroken, and he continues to speak rebelliously against God."

The word which the A.V. translates "extremity" occurs only in this passage. The LXX. has παράπτωμα, Vulg. scelus; either because they had a different reading, פשע for פש, or, more probably, as Gesen. suggests, because they took it to be an abbreviated form. It is, however, probable that the word, like so many others in this book, belongs to a cognate dialect; and in Arab. فاش (not, as Dillm., فشّ) means superbivit, gloriatus fuit, pec. de re nullius pretii. Freyt. 'Lex. Ar.' s.v.

XXXVI.—XXXVII.

The last discourse of Elihu. After a short preface stating his object, and asserting his truthfulness (1—4), he proceeds to prove that God is righteous, *first*, because He does justice to the afflicted, and raises the righteous to dignity, and watches over them continually (5—7); and *secondly*, because He makes their afflictions work for their good, awakening conscience, instructing their minds, and bringing about their reformation (8—11). Elihu thus takes an entirely different position from the other speakers, since he treats Job as one who had been substantially a righteous man, and an object of God's favour both before and in his suffering, though liable to punishment for some unknown transgression, the chastisement being a proof not of wrath but of love. *Thirdly*, because the result of the punishment is just; if men do not submit, they perish, and prove that they were from the beginning hypocrites; if they repent, they are restored, 10—16. Job is warned that his wrath may lead to his complete destruction, and admonished to magnify the work of God by confession and amendment for the good of his fellow-men, 17—25. Then (ch. xxxvii.) follows a description of the Almightiness of God. Amidst the indications of a rising storm, Elihu calls on Job to consider His greatness, and recognize His excellence in power, in judgment and infinite righteousness.

4. *perfect in knowledge*] By this Elihu means that he speaks with a perfect conviction of the truth of his arguments; perfectness means honesty, integrity, and is a word often applied to good men, to Job, for instance, both by himself and by the Lord.

5. *despiseth not any*] This refers to Job's reproaches of God for neglecting and despising his cause. No created being is too mean to be regarded by Him. The same is used by Bildad, viii. 20, where the A.V. has "cast away."

and wisdom] Or, He is mighty in strength of heart, *i.e.* of understanding, xxxiv. 14.

6. He gives equal attention both to the wicked and the poor, though He destroys one and saves the other by the same visitation.

the poor] *i.e.* the poor in spirit, the meek and humble.

7. The chief point in this and the two following verses is, that God's unceasing watchfulness over the righteous is shewn equally in their prosperity and in their adversity. "With kings are they on the throne;" this describes the ordinary, and in all cases the final result of God's love to the righteous; they are Kings and Priests to their God, inheritors of His kingdom. Elihu's words are even more true than he knows.

8 And if *they be* bound in fetters, *and* be holden in cords of affliction;

9 Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

10 He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

11 If they obey and serve *him*, they shall [b]spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

[b] ch. 21. 13.

12 But if they obey not, [†]they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.

† Heb. *they shall pass away by the sword.*

13 But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.

14 [†]They die in youth, and their life *is* among the [‖]unclean.

† Heb. *Their soul dieth.*
‖ Or, *sodomites.*

15 He delivereth the [‖]poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression.

‖ Or, *afflicted.*

16 Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait *into* a broad place, where *there is* no straitness; and [†]that which should be set on thy table *should be* full of fatness.

† Heb. *the rest of thy table.*

17 But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: [‖]judgment and justice take hold *on thee.*

‖ Or, *judgment and justice should uphold* thee.

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8. The words which describe afflictions which befal the righteous are purposely chosen to indicate their direct object, viz. to arrest and chastise them when they are going wrong. Fetters and bonds are to be understood figuratively, though the literal sense is defensible.

9. *their work*] *i.e.* the true character of their acts: the evil that is in them.

that they have exceeded] Or, **that they have become overweening**, great in their own conceit. Elihu fixes on the first and most natural temptation of a prosperous man: cf. ch. xv. 25. He is, however, careful not to follow the other speakers' example, and to charge Job with oppression, dishonesty, or cruelty.

11. *in pleasures*] The original word expresses a finer and more inward sense of enjoyment; but "pleasures" is frequently used in our Version for the deepest and highest happiness. Cf. Ps. xvi. 11. "Prosperity" is also too outward a word. The original has "in good," which includes all sources of pure enjoyment.

12. *by the sword*] A sudden and judicial infliction.

without knowledge] Because they would not receive instruction, knew not the day of their visitation: cf. iv. 21; Hos. iv. 6.

13. *heap up wrath*] Store, or set up wrath, angry rebellious feelings against God. The word, however, for wrath is not that which in this book generally denotes the bitter feelings of man, see v. 2, and vi. 2, but one which for the most part is used for the wrath of God; and it is taken in this sense by Rosen., and some other critics. Thus Rom. ii. 5, "treasurest up to thyself wrath." See also James v. 3.

they cry not] Sc. in prayer, cf. xxxiii. 26.

14. *They die in youth*] Or, as in marg., their soul dieth, *i.e.* they come to a premature end like youths who have destroyed the spring of life by licentiousness.

their life is among] Rather, and their life passeth away among the unclean. For the last word see note on Deut. xxiii. 17. The literal meaning is consecrated, *i.e.* devoted to the service of Astarte, an ancient form of the most hideous of all superstitions. Cf. Inter—cinædos. 'Juvenal,' II.

15. *in his affliction*] Or, **by affliction**. Their affliction is the very means of their deliverance; cf. xxxiii. 15—28; Ps. cxix. 67, 71; Heb. xii. 11.

in oppression] **By suffering.**

16. *Even so would he have*, &c.] The A.V. agrees substantially with the interpretation accepted by Schultens and some later critics: but the construction is encumbered with great difficulty, and the meaning attached to some words is very questionable. The following rendering, proposed by Ewald, and with some modifications adopted by Dillmann, is free from such objections, and is probably correct: "And thou also hast been seduced from (listening to) the voice of affliction (see *v.* 9) by thy boundless prosperity, and by the ease of thy table which was full of fatness." So that Elihu assumes that Job was overcome by the temptation, of which he had feared the effect upon his children, i. 4, 5. The meaning of the word here rendered "ease" (so Ew.) is questioned. Hahn takes it as our A.V. "What is laid upon thy table." Others, as Dr Lee and Bp. Wordsworth, "the laying down," which is less probable.

17. *But thou hast*, &c.] Or, "And thou art full of the judgment of the wicked, judgment and punishment hold fast of thee;" *i.e.* the result of that hardness or insensibility to previous warnings is, that at present Job is undergoing such punishments as are reserved for obstinate sinners, the punishment which is inseparable from justice.

take hold on thee] This is preferable to the marg. The clause may, however, mean

18 Because *there is* wrath, *beware* lest he take thee away with *his* stroke: then a great ransom cannot †deliver thee.

† Heb. *turn thee aside.*

19 Will he esteem thy riches? *no*, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.

20 Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.

21 Take heed, regard not iniquity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

22 Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?

23 Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?

24 Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.

25 Every man may see it; man may behold *it* afar off.

26 Behold, God *is* great, and we know *him* not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.

"judgment (*i.e.* punishment) and justice hold fast together," are inseparable.

18. The construction of this verse is extremely difficult: the most probable meaning is, **because there is wrath** (sc. in Job's heart), **let it not seduce thee in** (thy) **affliction**; (or, as Ewald renders the word, "abundance;") **and let not the great ransom** (*i.e.* the riches which thou canst offer in atonement) **turn thee aside.** The "great ransom" may, however, mean the great sufferings which were intended to bring Job to a sense of his sin, which in that case would have been accepted as a propitiatory sacrifice: see xxxiii. 24—28. This explanation may be accepted, though not without misgiving, as well adapted to the context and the general scope of Elihu's argument.

19. *Will he esteem*, &c.] The construction of this verse is exceedingly difficult, and the meaning of all the principal words is doubtful. The A. V. is defensible, but the rendering approved by some critics (Stick., Hahn, Del.) seems on the whole preferable. "Will thy outcry restore thee out of trouble, or all the efforts of strength?" This reproof is at once pointed and applicable to Job, who certainly had given no indications of trust in wealth, while he had repeatedly and earnestly expressed a desire that his bitter outcry and struggles might be available. (Dillmann, however, who examines very carefully the interpretations of preceding critics, proposes the following translation, "Will He (can He) bring thy cry into order (*i.e.* cause thee to offer a humble and acceptable prayer), without affliction, and without the instrumentality of force?" This is ingenious, but seems somewhat strained. The rendering may be, "Will He regard outcry? not in affliction (*i.e.* not even in severe affliction, so long as it proceeds from a rebellious spirit); nor (will He regard) any efforts of strength," *i.e.* any desperate struggles. The rendering "esteem" or "appreciate" for יערך is given, and well defended by Ges. The interpretation of the other words is strictly literal.

20. *Desire not the night*] Alluding to Job's repeated prayers to be cut off at once, and hid in the grave. This is an outcry which God cannot regard.

when people are cut off] Such a desire shews little fear of God's judgments, which Job had himself described; cf. xxvii. 19, 20, and xxxiv. 25.

21. *iniquity*] The iniquity of disregarding God's will.

than affliction] Or, "because of thy suffering;" the suffering has not done its proper work. The A. V., however, gives a good sense, and is probably correct. Job is accused of adhering to iniquity instead of yielding to affliction sent for his good.

22. *who teacheth like him?*] The key-note of Elihu's whole discourse; cf. xxxiii. 14, xxxv. 11, xxxvi. 9. All the manifestations of power and justice have for their primary and direct object the instruction of man's heart. This rendering, which is accepted by the generality of critics, and rests on good authority, (Targ., Syr., Rosen., Schlott., Del. &c.), is disputed, and that of the LXX., δυνάστης, is adopted by Ew., Hirz., Dillm. It involves an unusual form, מורה=מרא, and gives a feebler sense.

23. *Who hath enjoined him his way?*] A warning to Job, who seems to Elihu to have dictated the course which the Almighty should adopt; cf. xxxiv. 13.

24. *magnify his work*] By submission, by confession, by letting His punishment do its perfect work.

which men behold] *i.e.* all men see what has befallen Job; it is his duty to prove by his conduct that God visited him in righteousness and love: but the last word probably means "sing," *i.e.* celebrate; which men celebrate. Thus Ew., Hahn. Vulg. de quo cecinerunt viri.

26—33. The wondrous power and providence of God. The two ideas of power and goodness are associated closely in Elihu's mind; whereas the three friends dwell more upon the combination of power and justice,

27 For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof:

28 Which the clouds do drop *and* distil upon man abundantly.

29 Also can *any* understand the spreadings of the clouds, *or* the noise of his tabernacle?

30 Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth † the bottom of the sea. [† Heb. *the roots.*]

31 For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance.

32 With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not to shine* by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt.

33 The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning † the vapour. [† Heb. *that which goeth up.*]

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1 *God is to be feared because of his great works.* 15 *His wisdom is unsearchable in them.*

AT this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place.

2 † Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound *that* goeth out of his mouth. [† Heb. *Hear in hearing.*]

3 He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his † lightning unto the † ends of the earth. [† Heb. *light.* † Heb. *wings of the earth.*]

4 After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard.

5 God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.

6 For [a] he saith to the snow, Be thou *on* the earth; † likewise to the [a Ps. 147. 16, 17. † Heb. *and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of rain of his strength.*]

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and Job upon that of power and wisdom. Goodness, righteousness, and wisdom, are one in God; various aspects under which the essential principle of love is manifested.

27, 28. Rain always presents itself first to an Oriental mind as the greatest source of all blessings. The words are graphic and carefully chosen.

27. *For he maketh small*, &c.] The probable meaning of this verse is, "For He draweth up drops of water; they flow down as rain for His mist." The last words may mean, in place of the mist which is condensed; or, more probably, for the purpose of watering the earth: thus Gen. ii. 6, where the same word is used.

29. From rain Elihu proceeds to thunder. The whole passage contains a most vivid description of a rising storm, apparently one which was then coming on, preparing the minds of all present for the manifestation of the Godhead in the whirlwind; see note on ch. xxxviii. 1.

the spreadings] The rapid expansion of clouds, the gathering from all quarters, sure indications of the coming storm.

the noise of his tabernacle] The first crash of thunder, as it were, the crash of the Lord's tent; the Great King moving from His place: cf. Ps. xviii. 11, 12.

30. *upon it*] Or, "over Himself;" he surrounds Himself with light: cf. Hab iii. 4.

and covereth the bottom of the sea] The flashes of lightning cover the whole earth, as with a mantle of glorious light, and they reach even to the depths of the sea; thus Stahl., Del. The roots of the sea is a singular expression (see marg.), but it can scarcely bear any other meaning than the lowest depths.

31. Two opposite effects, in correspondence with the whole tenour of Elihu's argument; judgment upon the nations, abundance of food to His people.

32, 33. These two verses are exceedingly obscure, and the meaning of nearly every word is disputed. The following interpretation, on the whole, seems to adhere most closely to the text, and to be best adapted to the context: "He clotheth *His* hands with light (sc. lightning), and giveth it command whom it shall reach; the sound thereof (the crash which follows the lightning) announces concerning Him, fierceness of wrath against unrighteousness." This rendering requires no change in the letters, and but a slight change in the punctuation: see Hahn and Dillmann for a recension of interpretations.

CHAP. XXXVII. **1.** There is no pause here. Elihu describes the effects of the storm upon man.

2. *Hear attentively*] "Hear and hearken;" the sound of the thunder is in their ears.

3. *He directeth it*] Or, "He sendeth it forth." The rendering "directeth" refers to a Hebrew verb which has that meaning; the word, however, is probably Aramaic; it has the sense here assigned to it in Syriac.

4. *he will not stay them*] *i.e.* He sends flash after flash without intermission. The rendering "stay them" follows the Targum, and is probably correct; the word is probably Aramaic. Thus Dillm. and most critics.

small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.

7 He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work.

8 Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places.

9 †Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the †north.

10 By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

11 Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he scattereth †his bright cloud:

12 And it is turned round about by his counsels: that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

13 He causeth it to come, whether for †correction, or for his land, or for mercy.

14 Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.

15 Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?

16 Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

17 How thy garments *are* warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south *wind?*

18 Hast thou with him spread out the sky, *which is* strong, *and* as a molten looking glass?

† Heb. *Out of the chamber.*
† Heb. *scattering winds.*
† Heb. *the cloud of his light.*
† Heb. *a rod.*

6—10. The thunder reminds Elihu of all other manifestations of God's power, by which it is attended or followed. The fall of snow, always portentous to the mind of an eastern; then, *not* the "small rain," but "**the gush of rain**," "the great rain of His strength," the heavy downfall and rush of rain (the densissimus imber of Virgil) which follows the thunder-crash.

6. *Be thou on the earth*] **Fall on the earth**. Thus nearly all modern critics. The word is Aramaic.

7. *He sealeth up*] *i.e.* brings all human labours to a stand-still. so that men may meditate upon His work, or that men who are His work may have a season for reflection. Elihu here reverts to his fixed thought, whatever God does has man's *instruction* for its object. Homer has a similar expression in reference to winter; 'Il.' XVII. 549. *ὅς ῥά τε ἔργων ἀνθρώπους ἀνέπαυσεν ἐπὶ χθονί.* See too Hesiod quoted by Bp. Wordsworth.

8. The hush that follows the first burst: the beast go to their dens (fugere feræ, 'Georg.' I. 330), the world is left to man alone in the presence of God.

9. The whirlwind follows, a storm of hail. "From the south," rather, from the "secret place," the penetralia, the depository of God's agencies.

cold out of the north] Or, **Cold from His cloud-scattering winds**. Cf. Virg. 'Georg.' III. 196, Hyperboreis Aquilo—nubila differt. Thus in the Koran, LI. 1, and in Arabshah, winds are called "the scatterers;" the same word which is used here.

10. *straitened*] Cf. xxxviii. 30.

11. *Also by watering*, &c.] Or, **Also with vapours He loadeth the cloud**, the heavy clouds gathering again thickly after the hail-storm.

he scattereth, &c.] His light scattereth the dense cloud; most modern critics render "He spreadeth abroad the cloud of His light," the dense cloud pregnant with lightning: but the burst of lightning shattering the clouds appears to be described.

12. *it*] *i.e.* "the lightning," it turneth round and round, darts hither and thither in all directions; but ever under His counsels or guidance, for the fulfilment of His behests. See note on xxxvi. 32; and compare the description of the flaming sword, Gen. iii. 24, where the same word is used.

13. Thus, as ever, Elihu fixes attention on the everlasting purpose; whether for a scourge, whether for the earth (to fertilize it), whether for other purposes of mercy, He causeth it to reach its object.

14—24. Final appeal to Job.

15, 16. Hence the duty of patience, not knowing the how, the why, or the wherefore, what can we do but wait?

17. The connection of thought is rather obscure; probably Elihu means, Canst thou, who feelest, without understanding, the very slightest effects of God's works in nature, presume to judge His ways?

18. *strong, and as*, &c.] This does not mean that the sky is solid, on the contrary, the word rendered *sky* means a thin vaporous expanse; the marvel is that being such it should retain its form and beauty, its everlasting brightness like a **mirror** of polished metal, notwithstanding all the storms which pass over it.

looking glass] **Mirror**, not of glass, but metal, always used for that purpose by the

19 Teach us what we shall say unto him; *for* we cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness.

20 Shall it be told him that I speak? if a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.

21 And now *men* see not the bright light which *is* in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

22 †Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God *is* terrible majesty.

† Heb. *Gold.*

23 *Touching* the Almighty, we cannot find him out: *he is* excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

24 Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any *that are* wise of heart.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1 *God challengeth Job to answer.* 4 *God, by his mighty works, convinceth Job of ignorance,* 31 *and of imbecility.*

THEN the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

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ancients. See Exod. xxxviii. 8. Specimens are found in Egyptian monuments of extreme antiquity.

19. *darkness*] Mental and moral.

20. *that I speak*] Allusion to Job's wish to be heard, to speak in God's presence; see the close of Job's last discourse. The second clause should be rendered, **Or hath a man ever said that he would fain be destroyed?** *i.e.* such a wish is unnatural and unpardonable. Thus Dillm., Ew., &c.

21. *And now*, &c.] Or, **And now men cannot behold the bright light in the sky**. The storm is gone, the sky cleared of its clouds is full of light so glorious that man cannot look upon it. Thus Dillm., Ros., Ew.

22. *Fair weather*] Or, as in the margin, **gold**; sc. a golden glow. The meaning is uncertain; that adopted in the text suits the context, and is defended by many commentators ancient and modern. It has parallels in Arabic poetry, and appears in every way preferable to any other which has been suggested. A striking illustration has been pointed out by Mr Warburton. Cf. "Aurora, initium diei, quo aër ab igne solis tam aureo aurescit." Varro.

23. An admirable summary of the whole scope and bearing of Elihu's speech; all God's attributes harmonize with each other, and find their perfect manifestation in love.

he will not afflict] He will not afflict greatly, or willingly; affliction is not an end but a means. The construction, however, is doubtful, and many critics prefer another reading which gives the sense; "and He will not answer," *i.e.* will give no account of His acts, which cannot but be righteous. Thus LXX., Syr., Hirzel and Rosen.

24. Hence true, godly fear; "there is mercy with Him, therefore shall He be feared." Elihu's last word is one of warning. Job's danger, to his mind, was confidence in his own wisdom, but God regards the character, the will, and, until the inner man is corrected, He will not hearken to any struggles or murmurs.

CHAPS. XXXVIII. XXXIX. The four following chapters contain the answer of the Lord God. The mind of Job had been prepared for the Theophany, or manifestation, first, by the careful review of his past life, and of the principles which lay at the foundation of his religious creed; and then by the discourses of Elihu, in which the loving purposes of divine interpositions were for the first time distinctly enunciated. All that he now needs is a personal revelation, to be brought face to face with Him Whom in the midst of his great misery he had ventured to arraign. The Lord God does not, strictly speaking, reason with His creatures; that work He leaves to the human mind, whose discursive faculties have for their highest object the relations between Himself and man: but He does more, He reproves Job, and brings before his mind a vast and most comprehensive picture of His Providential administration of the universe. The discourse contains the deepest and highest view which the mind of a Patriarch, under divine teaching, could conceive of the mysteries of existence. The great lesson of all being the utter unsearchableness of the divine will and ways.

The first discourse is arranged in seven sections each complete in itself. First, The creation of the earth, sea and light (xxxviii. 1—15). The mysteries of creation, the depths of ocean and of sheol, the sources of light and darkness, of snow, hail, lightning, storm, of rain, dew, ice and frost (16—30); the government of the stars, of heaven and earth, of lightning and cloud, and the wisdom thereto required (31—38); the sustenance of animals, the lion and raven (38—41). Their generation, the gazelle and hind (xxxix. 1—4). The comparison of wild and tame animals, the wild ass, the oryx (5—12); the peculiar characteristics of the ostrich, the war-horse, the hawk and the eagle (13—30).

What is the object of this enumeration?

2 Who *is* this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and † answer thou me.

† Heb. *make me know.*

4 [a] Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, † if thou hast understanding.

a Ps. 104. 5. Prov. 30. 4.

† Heb. *if thou knowest understanding.*

5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 Whereupon are the † foundations

† Heb. *sockets.*

Certainly not to display the learning and ingenuity of the writer, or to perplex the mind of Job with curious and unanswerable questions. The patriarch was better taught: he learned thoroughly the lesson, which in his better nature he had all along adopted as the living principle of his faith, that although the special object, which God may have in any one of His works, may be wholly undiscoverable, if not incomprehensible to man; yet that they each and all display a manifold wisdom, an all-pervading and all-controlling providence, an adaptation of means to ends, which are inseparably connected with absolute goodness, and should teach man to submit, without a question, without struggles or reluctance, to whatever He, the Almighty Maker and King, may ordain or permit.

CHAP. XXXVIII. **1.** *answered Job*] Bp. Wordsworth points out that the special mention of Job implies that another speaker had intervened.

out of the whirlwind] From this expression it may be inferred that the voice of the Lord was heard, though no form was seen. The Lord, however, addresses Himself to the heart and understanding, not to the senses, by His word; the meaning may therefore be that the voice entered the heart, where it shaped itself into the methodical, and, so to speak, artistic form which pertains to the highest order of Hebrew poetry; thus, even in this direct address attributed to the Lord Himself, presenting a combination of the human and divine elements. This appears more consonant with the whole tone and character of this work than the supposition that the revelation, not merely in substance and principle, but in its expression, was altogether objective. As the storm was passing away with a vehement wind, clearing the heavens and presenting a lively symbol of the terrible majesty of God, Job feels the near presence of his Maker (cf. 1 K. xix. 11, 12); the Word rings through his heart, it brings back all that he had ever learned of His works, creation arises before him to witness for its Maker, the Spirit of God moulds his thoughts and completes his knowledge, and leads him to the one conclusion, which, once accepted, leaves no place for doubts, for murmurs, for struggles, for aught but implicit submission to infinite wisdom and love.

the whirlwind] The article refers to the *last part* of Elihu's address. It is an attestation to the genuineness of that discourse: nor has any satisfactory explanation been suggested by those who reject it. Nothing could be more abrupt than the transition from Job's last words to this statement.

2. *words without knowledge*] Job had partly repudiated the wilder and more unseemly words wrung from him by anguish, and the taunts of his unfriendly counsellors; but he "darkened counsel," *i.e.* cast doubts upon the wise and loving purposes of the divine administration, and had concluded with a challenge which shewed the need of humiliation, before peace and pardon could come. The false position must be abandoned, Job was to go near unto God (xxxi. 37), not, however, as a prince, but as a child of dust, "in dust and ashes," xlii. 6.

3. The arrangement of the following verses is essentially poetical. Earth, sea and light are presented in three clauses, each consisting of eight members. The verses are measured by the strictest laws of Hebrew parallelism.

answer thou me] Or, **do thou inform Me.**

4. *Where wast thou*] If, as appears most probable, this question refers to the magnificent speculation of Job in ch. xxviii. it implies that even in the highest and most reverential movement of the human mind there is a somewhat bordering on presumption. Not that those words contained any thing contrary to the truth, but that they seemed to claim a power of insight not given to man. It is to be observed that Eliphaz had used arguments singularly corresponding to this both in substance and form. God sets the seal on the truth by whomsoever it may be spoken. The spirit of Eliphaz was in fault, not his understanding.

laid the foundations] This expression is not quite correct, it gives rather a false impression, as though the earth were represented, according to old heathen cosmical notions, as resting on a basis out of itself. The original has simply **when I founded the earth,** *i.e.* created and established it. See Note on xxvi. 7. The A.V. follows the Vulg.: the LXX. θεμελιοῦν, a good rendering.

5. *measures...line*] The absolute order of creation is prominently recognized. It is a reign of law.

6. *Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?*] Or **sunk.** The expressions here are metaphorical; the earth is compared to a building, the word "foundations" here is

† Heb. *made to sink?*

thereof † fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

b Ps. 104. 9.

8 [b] Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb?

9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,

‖ Or, *established my decree upon it.*

10 And ‖ brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors,

11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall † thy proud waves be stayed?

† Heb. *the pride of thy waves.*

12 Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; *and* caused the dayspring to know his place;

13 That it might take hold of the † ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?

† Heb. *wings.*

14 It is turned as clay *to* the seal; and they stand as a garment.

15 And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.

16 Hast thou entered into the

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quite distinct from that in *v.* 4. It means properly the bases of a column, here we are to understand the lower strata on which the earth's surface rests: the expression represents with singular accuracy facts but lately disclosed by science.

corner stone]. Cf Ps. cxviii. 22; Zech. iv. 7.

7. *morning stars sang together*] The stars are therefore represented as in existence before the earth assumed its actual shape; an important point in reference to Hebrew cosmogony. The expression "sang together" is of course metaphorical, and would not justify the supposition that the writer, like the Platonists, believed the stars were living creatures: cf. Ps. xix. 1—3, cxlviii. 3. Shakespeare's allusion is well-known: "Each in his motion like an angel sings," &c. 'Merchant of Venice,' v. 1. See Note below.

sons of God] *i.e.* the angels (cf. i. 6), whose pre-existence is thus distinctly affirmed. This representation of creation is a poetical development of the first chapter of Genesis, full, however, of personifications and metaphors of which no trace is to be found in that document. The singing and shouts are, so to speak, an echo of the Creator's declaration, "God saw that it was good." This is a protest against one of the oldest forms of dualistic error. Bp. Wordsworth refers most justly to Ezra iii. 10, and Luke ii. 9—13.

8—11. This refers to Gen. i. 9. It is a magnificent realization of the mighty rush of the waters when the mountains were upheaved. The words "gathered together" in Genesis expresses a rapid simultaneous motion. The ocean is here personified as a newborn giant, shut in, confined, wrapt and swaddled in the first outburst of its might.

10. Literally, and I brake **over it** my decree. The figure seems to point to the sharp abrupt outline of a rocky coast (thus Ew., who compares ῥηγμὶν); but it may refer simply to the absoluteness of the restraining law, once given it needs no repetition. The word must be rendered *brake*, and cannot mean circumdedi (Vulg.). See Note below.

12—15. The law of light.

12. *since thy days*] *i.e.* since thy days began, on any one day of thy short life hast thou called forth the morning, as God doth daily? see note on ch. iii. 4.

13. The very remarkable figures in this verse and in the following one occur only in this passage. They represent vividly two effects of the light, the one moral, evil-doers are discomfited by it, cf. xxiv. 17; the other physical, earth assumes new form and beauty. The earth is represented as a vast expanse, the light seizes at one rush its extremities, and causes, so to speak, a concussion, or shock, by which the children of darkness are panic-struck, and, as it were, shaken off its surface. This has a special reference to Job's discourse ch. xxiv. He there represented the evil-doers as working with impunity in darkness; here he is told that the light, which they hate and dread, has a direct mission to overthrow them.

14. *It is turned as clay to the seal*] Or, **It is changed as seal-clay**: *i.e.* just as the fine clay (used as wax by the ancients) is changed, pressed into a distinct form by the seal, so the earth, which during the night lay a shapeless mass, when the light falls upon it suddenly assumes colour, and with colour distinct form: to use M. Renan's words: "L'aurore fait sur la terre l'effet d'un sceau sur la terre sigillée, en donnant de la forme, et du relief, à la surface de l'univers, qui pendant la nuit est comme un chaos indistinct."

and they stand] Or, "And *all things* **stand out as a garment**:" radiant with distinct hues, and rich embroidery.

15. *their light*] *i.e.* the darkness which to them is as light, in which they do their work; see the passage quoted above, xxiv. 13—17.

16—21. The impossibility of knowing the origin, end, object or course of creation, is

springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

17 Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

18 Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.

19 Where *is* the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkness, where *is* the place thereof,

20 That thou shouldest take it [1]to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths *to* the house thereof?

[1] Or, *at.*

21 Knowest thou *it*, because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days *is* great?

22 Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

23 Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

24 By what way is the light parted, *which* scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

25 Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

26 To cause it to rain on the earth, *where* no man *is; on* the wilderness, wherein *there is* no man;

27 To satisfy the desolate and waste *ground;* and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

28 Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

29 Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

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shewn by reference to the depths of ocean, to the unseen world, to the extent of earth, and to the alternations of light and darkness. Modern science continually extends the sphere of knowledge, but leaves those limits untouched; in fact, the wider the sphere of our vision, the vaster are the regions of the unknown brought home to our consciousness.

16. *springs of the sea*] Lit. "weepings:" but the word evidently in this passage means sources, or as in Gen. vii. 11, "the fountains of the great deep." LXX. πηγὴν θαλάσσης: the Vulg., ad profunda maris, probably expresses the true sense of the passage.

in the search of the depth] Or, **in the recess of the deep.** The word rendered "search" means here, as in viii. 8, that which is an object of research, or which men vainly attempt to fathom. In Ps. xcv. 4, P.B.V. has "corners;" it means remote districts.

17. *the gates of death*] The same connection of thoughts is found in ch. xxvi: cf. also the note on xvii. 16.

doors] See Note below.

shadow of death] See note on x. 21.

18. *perceived*] Or **comprehended:** has that intelligence of which man boasts, extended even to the breadth of the whole earth? A question not even in this age to be answered confidently.

19. *the way*] The LXX. read "the land," which suits the context.

20. *bound*] Or **boundary.** Job is asked whether he knows the source of light so as to be able to direct it to its own boundary; in other words, to determine the limits of light and darkness.

21. *then born*] The climax points to the first word of Creation, "Let there be light."

22—27. Natural phenomena, their causes, uses, and effects, alike inscrutable.

23. *time of trouble*] *i.e.* the time in which God's judgments are accomplished by natural agencies. There is no reason to suppose a special reference to such interventions as those which marked the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan: cf. Josh. x. 11; Ps. xviii.; Isai. xxviii. 17—21. The principle of divine government by secondary causes belongs to the fundamentals of natural as well as revealed religion.

24. *which scattereth*, &c.] Or, **Doth the eastwind scatter itself over the earth?** The word "which" should be omitted, and "by what way" repeated. Two distinct questions are asked referring severally to the distribution of light and of wind. See Note below.

25. *Who hath divided*, &c.] Or, **Who hath riven a channel for the torrent of waters?** *i.e.* for the heavy rains which descend like a torrent through the riven atmosphere.

of thunder] Lit. "of voices," sc. of God: cf. Exod. xix. 18, 19; Ps. lxxvii. 17.

26. The regions inhabited by man are not the only objects of God's mysterious providence: this bears upon the obscure problem of utilitarian teleology. The only answer given or suggested to speculative inquiry is simply that His ways are inscrutable.

28—30. These questions refer not to the analysis of phenomena or of natural laws, but to the inner principles, of which science *now* professes to know nothing

30 The waters are hid as *with* a stone, and the face of the deep † is frozen.

† Heb. *is taken.*

31 Canst thou bind the sweet influences of ‖ † Pleiades, or loose the bands of † Orion?

‖ Or, *the seven stars.* † Heb. *Cimah.* † Heb. *Cesil?*

32 Canst thou bring forth ‖ Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou † guide Arcturus with his sons?

‖ Or, *the twelve signs.* † Heb. *guide them.*

33 Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

34 Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

35 Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, † Here we *are?*

† Heb. *Behold us!*

36 *c* Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

c chap. 32. 8. Eccles. 2. 26.

37 Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or † who can stay the bottles of heaven,

† Heb. *who can cause to lie down.*

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30. *are hid*] Or, **The waters are hardened like stone, and the surface of the deep is held fast.** The word rendered "hid" in the A.V. is probably connected with the root "to curdle," Dillm.; hence "condense," "harden." The word "frozen" A.V., "taken" marg., is more correctly rendered ch. xli. 15, "shut up together."

31—33. The phenomena of the heavens.

sweet influences] The word probably means "fastenings" (thus LXX., Targ., Rashi, Kimchi, Dillm.); but our version gives the general sense correctly; no created being can either draw together the heavenly bodies, or disturb their union. The word correctly rendered Pleiades denotes a "heap" or "group" (see ix. 9), and probably was intended merely to describe the appearance of that beautiful constellation, which, as well as Orion, in Syria is far more brilliant, and remains longer above the horizon, being at an altitude seventeen degrees higher than in our climate. Merx renders the clause "the girdle of the Pleiades," and observes that Amrul-kais, l. 25, compares the Pleiads to a girdle.

Orion] Literally, "the fool," "or giant." See ix. 9. The early observers of the skies may have seen in this constellation the figure of powers which rebelled against God, but the tradition is uncertain. The bands might in that case mean the chains by which the giant is fastened to the firmament; but the general idea of a constellation fixed in its place by divine power is at once clearer, more natural, and more true: the intrusion of a myth, however beautiful and significant, is to be deprecated. The rendering "bands" is questionable, the word probably means "cords," by which the constellation is, as it were, drawn.

32. *Mazzaroth*] It is right to retain this word, which is evidently the name of a constellation (thus the LXX. μασουρώθ): but it is doubtful which constellation is meant. Many critics follow the Targum which identifies it with the Zodiac; this would imply a change of reading or interchange of letters, (מזלות for מזרות), which, though possible, ought not to be assumed without necessity; and is open to the more serious objection, that the Zodiac could scarcely be interposed between Orion and the Bear. The etymology of the word, as Dillmann observes, points to the root *zahar* (Arab. *zoharah*, glittering star), and a constellation, or star of peculiar brightness, is certainly meant; very probably the planet Jupiter or Venus (Vulg. Lucifer), shining with peculiar splendour at certain seasons; hence the question, Canst thou *bring out* Mazzaroth at its *season?* Or the Sirius of the Egyptians, whose "coming forth" determines the chronology of the seasons and years. See Note below.

Arcturus] See notes on ix. 9.

34—38. Clouds, lightning and rain are alike inscrutable as to their causes and effects.

34. *thy voice*] *i.e.* Canst thou, like God, produce thunder followed by heavy rain?

35. Cf. Matt. viii. 9. There the centurion recognizes in our Lord the same power over nature which a military commander has over his dependants.

36. From the context it would seem that the wisdom here spoken of is the gift of discerning the causes, or of regulating the course, of the natural phenomena, which are here described.

inward parts] Or "the kidneys," which in Hebrew physiology are regarded as the seat of instinctive yearnings.

to the heart] The Hebrew word means insight, the intuitive faculty, hence, it may be, "the heart." The gift of clear discernment is thus represented as an addition to the natural faculty. The LXX. have a rendering which shews that their MS. was very corrupt in this passage.

37. *stay*] The margin, "cause to lie down," is more accurate: but the sense appears to be, who can turn the clouds down, so as to empty them like skins of water? The clouds are called the "urns," or waterskins of heaven, in several passages of Arabian poets quoted by Schultens: thus "adducit Euronotus *hydrias*, quæ repletæ sunt aquis;

ǁ Or, *When the dust is turned into mire.*
† Heb. *is poured.*
d Ps. 104. 21.
† Heb. *the life.*

38 ǁ When the dust † groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

39 *d* Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill † the appetite of the young lions,

40 When they couch in *their* dens, *and* abide in the covert to lie in wait?

41 *e* Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

e Ps. 147. 9. Matt. 6. 26.

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easque insequitur *uter* imbrem profundens." By the utres, bladders or water-skins, are always meant the more bulky clouds.

38. *into hardness*] Or, **when the dust is molten into a mass.** The words describe the effect of rain upon the loose dust which it consolidates.

39. *the lion*] Rather, "the lioness," in search of prey for her whelps. The thought of God providing for the beasts of prey, for carrion-birds, hostile or loathsome to man, forcibly illustrates the narrowness of utilitarian speculation. Compare Luke xii. 24. The psalms give many striking parallels (see especially Ps. civ.), showing how deeply the mind of the Hebrews was penetrated by the mystery and inscrutable wisdom of the Lord of Creation.

fill the appetite] Or **satisfy the craving of the whelps.**

40. *abide*] Or **lurk**, lit. "sit." The attitude of the lion in its lair, or covert, is described by the same word in Ps. xvii. 12, where the A.V. has "lurking." Compare also Ps. x. 9, 10.

to lie in wait] Or "for ambush." "They lurk" as a soldier in ambush.

41. *who provideth*, &c.]. Cf. Ps. cxlvii. 9; and Luke xii. 24; also Matt. vi. 26.

The main thought which pervades this discourse is not so much the inability of man to search out God's ways, as the apparent opposition between the conclusions of his understanding and the purposes which those ways indicate so indistinctly.

NOTES on CHAP. XXXVIII. 7, 10, 11, 17, 24, and 32.

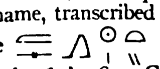
7. The LXX. and Syr. have "when the stars were created," a prosaic reading, which Merx adopts. The change of ברן into ברא is far more probable than the converse.

10. The Targ. has פסק, "broke off" or "ended." LXX. *ἐθέμην δ' αὐτῷ ὅρια*; hence Merx ואשית. The emendation is open to the same objection as the preceding; it substitutes an easy and prosaic word for one that is difficult but highly graphic. A striking instance of this acute critic's inability to appreciate such imagery as great poets, like Dante and Shakespeare, delight in, is afforded by his rejection of *vv.* 14, 15, as hopelessly corrupt.

11. The A.V. probably gives the true meaning, but there is some difficulty in the construction; with ישית taken impersonally the clause may mean "a stay is made against thy swelling waves." Thus the LXX. may have had the true reading, יִשָּׁבֵר, *συντριβήσεται*: the Syr. has ܬܟܠܐ, "shall be stayed:" probably, as Merx supposes, the true reading was ܬܬܒܪ, "shall be broken."

17. The LXX. render the second clause *πυλωροὶ δ' ᾅδου ἰδόντες σε ἔπτηξαν.* Thus the Coptic nimnont nte Ament: sc. instead of שערי they read שוערי, door-keepers, instead of doors. This representation is entirely Egyptian, and may have originated with the Alexandrian translators. The door-keepers of Ament, the Egyptian equivalent of Sheol, are described as struck with terror, or falling down in homage at the feet of a mighty spirit on his entrance. Thus on the Sarcophagus of Seti I., "the occupants of this portal humbly salute the Great Deity." See Bonomi, Pl. 2, l. 7.

24. For אור, "light," the LXX. and Coptic have *πάχνη*, hoar-frost, sc. כפר. This appears a probable reading; the letters in the ancient alphabet do not differ widely in form, and the mention of frost between snow, hail, and east wind, is natural. Merx follows Ewald, and substitutes רוח for אור, which has the disadvantage of being purely conjectural.

32. An entirely new derivation of the word is suggested by some curious remarks of M. Romieu in the Egyptian 'Zeitschrift,' 1869, p. 41. The milky way bore the name Masarati: now it was an ancient opinion that this way represented the course of the Sun at a remote period; the traces, so to speak, of his footsteps. That name, transcribed in Hieroglyphics, would be  Mas-ra-ti; the course, or march of the Sun-God. This corresponds very closely to the Hebrew Mazzaroth in form. The omission of all reference to such a phenomenon would be remarkable M. Romieu makes no reference to the Hebrew Mazzaroth, nor does he state in what ancient language the word Masarati, for which he refers to Stöffler, occurs. The passage is found in Stöffler 'de Sphærâ' (1534), fol. 69, b, "maiarati area quæ movetur:" the word with its explanation is drawn from Ptolemy: it is probably Arabic, in which language al-majarrah means "milky way."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1 *Of the wild goats and hinds.* 5 *Of the wild ass.* 9 *The unicorn.* 13 *The peacock, stork, and ostrich.* 19 *The horse.* 26 *The hawk.* 27 *The eagle.*

KNOWEST thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? *or* canst thou mark when [a] the hinds do calve?

[a] Psal. 29. 9.

2 Canst thou number the months *that* they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

3 They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.

4 Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.

5 Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

6 Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the † barren land his dwellings.

† Heb. *salt places.*

7 He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying † of the driver.

† Heb. *of the exactor.*

8 The range of the mountains *is* his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

9 Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?

10 Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

11 Wilt thou trust him, because

CHAP. XXXIX. 1. *Knowest thou*] Bochart observes with truth, "here there is no question of idle and merely speculative knowledge, but of that knowledge which belongs to God only, by which He not only knows all things, but *directs and governs them.*" Thus too Dillmann, "Observation of nature is a special characteristic of Hebrew poetry and thought." It may be added also that "knowledge" includes here a perception of final causes, of which science says little, and knows less.

wild goats] Literally, "rock-climbers," a generic term including the ibex. Cf. 1 Sam. xxiv. 2; and see Tristram, 'Natural History of the Bible,' p. 95, "It inhabits exclusively the more desolate and rocky parts of the country."

calve] The Hebrew word describes the sharp pangs of parturition. Cf. Ps. xxix. 9.

3. *their sorrows*] That is, their young brought forth in pain. Exactly the same expression is used by Euripides (ῥίψαι ὠδῖνα). Infants and young children are called "pangs" (احبال) by Arab poets. Thus too, probably, Æschylus, 'Agam.' 54, πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες.

4. *are in good liking*] Or **fatten**, grow up lusty and strong: such, however, is the meaning of the A.V. Cf. Dan. i. 10.

with corn] Or, "in the wilderness," far from their dams, whom they forsake very early.

5. *wild ass*] The ferā or wild ass of Arabia. The beast is well-known, and often described by travellers: single-hoofed, with a head like the gazelle, rough hair of a dingy yellow, and white belly. Its speed is beyond that of the fastest horse. Tristram.

wild ass] The animal has here two names in Hebrew, one denoting speed, the other shyness, or untameableness, the second is used in this clause.

6. *barren land*] Or **salt waste** deserts thickly incrusted with natron, or salt, which the wild asses are known to lick with avidity.

7. *of the driver*] Or **task-master**; the same word occurs Exod. v. 6, but not in i. 11; where see note.

8. *The range*] A good rendering for the Hebrew "search." A slight change of pointing would give "He ranges the mountains as his pasture."

9. *the unicorn*] Or Rêm. The question whether any one-horned species of antelope or gazelle exists, or ever did exist, in the deserts of Asia and Africa, has not been satisfactorily answered. Here, however, it must be remarked that the Hebrew word does not suggest the notion, it simply names an animal "Rêm," which early translators identified with the legendary unicorn (μονοκέρως), but which modern commentators take to mean the oryx, a well-known species of gazelle. The oryx is often represented on Egyptian monuments with a single horn, but this is probably a mere defect of drawing. It is a mistake to confound it with the buffalo (which is tameable, and was unknown in Western Asia until a comparatively modern period), or with the Rhinoceros. The whole passage indicates a beast resembling the ox, such as the oryx, or leucoryx, which chew the cud, have cloven feet, and are bulkier than any of their congeners. See note on Num. xxiii. 22. Dr Tristram, whose authority is paramount, says, "beyond all doubt the Reem is the Urus of Cæsar, *i.e.* the Auerochs." See 'Nat. Hist. of Bible,' p. 149.

his strength *is* great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

12 Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather *it into* thy barn?

13 *Gavest thou* the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or ‖wings and feathers unto the ostrich?

‖ Or, *the feathers of the stork and ostrich.*

14 Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust,

15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

16 She is hardened against her young ones, as though *they were* not hers: her labour is in vain without fear;

17 Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.

18 What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.

19 Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

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13. *the peacocks*] This is admitted to be a mistranslation. The word so rendered, which literally means a wild tremulous cry, denotes the female ostrich. The verse should be translated, **The pinion of the ostrich exulteth, but hath she the fond wing and plumage of the stork?** The meaning appears to be, the ostrich has quivering wings, pinions and plumage like those of birds remarkable for their care of their young, but has it the same qualities? The affectionateness and fine instinct of the stork are noted by ancient naturalists, *e.g.* by Pliny, x. 23, and Aristotle, 'H. A.' IX. 20. Each point in the description is contested, but it might be assumed that the writer is not likely to be ignorant of matters belonging to desert life, with which he shews himself so familiar, and most of the objections, as will be shewn, rest upon misapprehension. Merx holds that the word rendered "plumage" means "claw;" (but see Ges., 'Thes.,' s. v. נוץ). The sense would thus be "is its pinion affectionate, and its claw?"

14. *leaveth her eggs in the earth*] The nest of the ostrich is always in the sand, deep and round, with layers of eggs, about thirty. The "leaving" does not mean "forsaking," but simply committing to the sand. Some accounts state that the female ostrich leaves her nest altogether at seasons to her mate; but the fact seems to be that the female incubates alone by day, and at night she is joined by the male.

15. *forgetteth*] This is questioned, but in fact the outer layer of eggs is generally so ill-covered, that they are destroyed in quantities by jackals, wild cats, &c., and that the natives carry them away, only taking care not to leave the marks of their footsteps, since when the ostrich finds that her nest is discovered, she crushes the whole brood and builds a nest elsewhere.

16. *hardened*] See the last note; to this it may be added that the female ostrich forsakes her nest at the least alarm, and runs screaming after her mate, who, according to native hunters, brings her back, when both are often shot.

17. *deprived her*] The point here, as throughout the discourse, is the inscrutableness of God's ways: the mysteries of instinct often perplex the teleologist. This statement coincides with the observations of all natives, "more stupid than an ostrich," is a common proverb, justified by the facts which are stated in the preceding notes.

18. *she scorneth*] Hence another proverb, "swifter than an ostrich." It is remarked, that when there is a breeze the ostrich rises at once, and rapidly outstrips her pursuers, but that when the air is still, she seeks to hide herself behind hillocks, or in hollows, a vain attempt, which may have been regarded as an additional indication of want of "wisdom." The word rendered "lifteth up herself" occurs in no other passage. It was probably a special term used by the natives, and means apparently "lashes the air."

19. This passage, as a modern naturalist (K. Löffler, 'Geschichte des Pferdes,' 1863, quoted by Delitzsch) says, is at once the most ancient and the most beautiful description of the noblest of quadrupeds.

thunder] This translation is generally abandoned. The word, however, denotes convulsive trembling, not of fear, but rage: or, as a secondary meaning, thunder. The point which struck those who saw for the first time the mighty war-horse in battle must have been the terror of the neck with its quivering muscles and tossing mane, and the word here used denotes most probably that impression. Clothed with terror, may be the best rendering, it includes the idea of a vehement and terrific movement. Cf. Hom. 'Il.' VI. *v.* 50, λόφον ἱππιοχαίτην δεινὸν ἐπ' ἀκροτάτης κόρυθος νεύοντα. But "thunder," if understood metaphorically, is an apter translation than "mane," a rendering which has no authority in Hebrew, or any cognate dialect, and is dry hard prose. Carlyle, with the instinct of genius, selects this as a special instance of the truthfulness of the description in Job. "So *true* every way; true eyesight and vision for all things; material things not less than

20 Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils *is* [1] terrible.

21 [‖] He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in *his* strength: he goeth on to meet [†] the armed men.

22 He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

23 The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

24 He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that *it is* the sound of the trumpet.

25 He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

26 Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, *and* stretch her wings toward the south?

27 Doth the eagle mount up [†] at thy command, and make her nest on high?

28 She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

29 From thence she seeketh the prey, *and* her eyes behold afar off.

30 Her young ones also suck up blood: and [b] where the slain *are*, there *is* she.

[1] Heb. *terror.*
‖ Or, His feet *dig.*
† Heb. *the armour.*
† Heb. *by thy mouth.*
b Matth. 24. 28. Luke 17. 37.

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spiritual; the Horse—'hast thou clothed his neck with *thunder?*'" 'Lectures on Heroes,' p. 78.

20. *make him afraid*] Or, **make him spring**, the word, however, does not describe "leaping," but the terrible rush at the moment of charging: the combination of the utmost lightness with the greatest force.

the glory of his nostrils] Or, "the glory of his **snorting** is terror." Terror and admiration are blended. Cf. Jer. viii. 16.

21. *He paweth*] **He diggeth the plain**, lit. they *dig*. The word "dig" undoubtedly describes the pawing of horses (cf. "cavat tellurem," 'Georg.' III. 80), but the plural "they" is perplexing. The ellipse "feet," as in marg., is quite improbable.

the valley] Literally, "a depressed or level plain," fit for an engagement of cavalry.

the armed men] The heavy-armed infantry, which the Greeks trained so as to resist the onset of horsemen: in this, however, they were anticipated by the Israelites, who conquered Palestine as foot-men.

23. *The quiver*, &c.] *i.e.* the quiver, and other arms of its rider, rattle against the side of the war-horse in its on-rush.

24. *swalloweth the ground*] *i.e.* the space between the armies which disappears as though swallowed up. Cf. 'Æn.' v. 316, corripiunt spatia. The metaphor is common in Arabian poets.

neither believeth he] The sense is clear and forcible. The steed waits impatiently for the signal of onset, and when it sounds can scarcely believe that its hope is realized. Cf. xxix. 24. The meaning "stand still," proposed doubtfully by Gesenius, "fortasse," and defended by Hirz., Dillm., is scarcely borne out by Hebrew usage. Renan has "Il ne se possède plus quand le clairon sonne." It is to be remarked that the only animal which in this discourse is mentioned in connection with the uses of man, is that which is represented as mixing with the strongest warriors as their equal, or superior, an object of admiration, of awe and terror. Other creatures are independent of man, or useless to him, this tramples him down, and mocketh at fear.

25. *He saith among*, &c.] Or, **At every blast of the trumpet he crieth Aha!** The loud neighing answers the call. Renan, for once, with singular bad taste, has "il dit Allons!"

26. *the hawk*] Even more striking is the utter independence of migratory birds of prey. On the hawk cf. Plin. x. 8.

toward the south] Moved by an instinct wholly unconnected with human wants.

28. *rock*] Or **cliff**.

30. *Her young ones*] Merx rejects this clause, partly because it disturbs the metre, as he arranges it, and partly because the young of the eagle are, as he states, fed on carrion; a futile objection, since the eagle bears living prey to its brood. The line is remarkably graphic in the Hebrew.

where the slain are] The only point of contact between the eagle and man.

Thus throughout the discourse two points are kept before Job, the infinite wisdom of God, shewn in the impartation of instincts infinitely varied and marvellously satisfied, and the impossibility of discovering the regulating or central principle. Man has his own definite position, he is chief and head of creation, but when he attempts to explain God's works by reference to his own wants he is utterly foiled. The inference which Job ought to draw is, that he knows nothing, and can know nothing, save that God is unsearchable, and that man's one duty is unquestioning submission.

CHAPTER XL.

1 *Job humbleth himself to God.* 6 *God stirreth him up to shew his righteousness, power, and wisdom.* 15 *Of the behemoth.*

MOREOVER the LORD answered Job, and said,

2 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct *him?* he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

3 ¶ Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

6 ¶ Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

7 [a] Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

8 [b] Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

9 Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

10 [c] Deck thyself now *with* majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.

11 Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one *that is* proud, and abase him.

12 Look on every one *that is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

13 Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in secret.

14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

15 ¶ Behold now [1] behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

16 Lo now, his strength *is* in his

[a] chap. 38. 3.
[b] Psal. 50. 21. Rom. 3. 4.
[c] Ps. 104.
[1] Or, *the elephant*, as some think.

CHAP. XL. **2.** The great point is thus determined: any reasoning, which implies a right to remonstrate with the Almighty, or to dictate the course which He ought to adopt, is presumption. Job had fully recognized the wisdom and omnipotence of God, but had questioned His righteousness: he had to learn that God's ways are not man's ways, nor within his competence to judge.

3—5. The first effects are humiliation and submission: but silence and submission are not enough. What is wanted is teachableness, and perfect trust, of which this first confession of Job does not give any clear indication: hence the occasion for a second address.

5. *Once have I spoken*] All the previous speeches of Job were pervaded by two thoughts, which he no longer defends; he will no more assume that God's visitations imply wrath, or that he can maintain his own righteousness.

6. The second discourse follows; it has three divisions of unequal length; the first shews that in order to argue with God, man must have attributes like Him; the next describes Behemoth; the last, Leviathan.

out of the whirlwind] As before; see xxxviii. 1. The storm returns, and goes on until the whole series of thoughts has passed before the patriarch's mind.

7—14. The first impression is general. He who presumes to argue with God must, like Him, be arrayed with majesty, able, like Him, to reduce all creatures to subjection. The moral law of the divine government is briefly intimated in 11—13.

15—24. The description of Behemoth. On the question whether the description in this and the following chapters belong to the original book, see Introduction.

15. *behemoth*] Bochart first indentified this animal with the Hippopotamus, and shewed the accuracy of the description. At present the point is universally admitted by scholars. Dr Tristram says, "it is clear that the description suits the hippopotamus exactly, and it alone." 'Nat. History of Bible,' p. 52. The word in Hebrew probably means the great beast, or the beast of beasts, that which combines in the highest degree the marvellous powers and instincts of the graminivorous animals. It has, however, been supposed by Bochart and others, and with *a priori* probability, that the word may be Egyptian. See Note below.

which I made with thee] *i. e.* together with thee, or as well as thee; both are alike My creatures.

he eateth grass as an ox] Or **herbage.** The animal feeds on roots, and the rich vegetation of the land bordering on the Nile; coming out of the river, by night generally, but by day also in thinly populated districts.

16. *his strength*] The great characteristic of the animal is its huge strength, so vast that it can overthrow large boats.

loins, and his force *is* in the navel of his belly.

17 [1]He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

18 His bones *are as* strong pieces of brass; his bones *are* like bars of iron.

19 He *is* the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach *unto him*.

20 Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.

21 He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.

22 The shady trees cover him *with* their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.

23 Behold, [†]he drinketh up a river, *and* hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.

24 [1]He taketh it with his eyes: *his* nose pierceth through snares.

[1] Or, *He setteth up.*

[†] Heb. *he oppresseth.*

[1] Or, *Will any take him in his sight,* or, *bore his nose with a gin?*

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navel of his belly] Or **muscles of his belly**. This word, which occurs nowhere else, marks a peculiarity of structure. The muscles, like roots of large plants, are enormously strong, supporting the huge paunch, and probably developed by struggles against the current. The elephant, on the contrary, is most easily wounded in the belly.

17. *like a cedar*] The comparison applies not to the size, the animal's tail is short, but to the strength or rigidity. He moveth, or erects it; such is probably the meaning of the word, as of the Arabic "khafada."

the sinews, &c.] The clause should be rendered **the sinews of his thighs are knit firmly**. The A.V. follows the Targ. and Vulg., but the meaning is clear from the Arabic.

18. *His bones*, &c.] Or, **his bones are as tubes of copper, his ribs are bars of iron**. In the second clause a synonym for bones is used, which probably means "ribs," as contrasted with the hollow bones of the limbs.

19. *chief of the ways*] The masterpiece, so to speak, of creation; an expression which refers either to its bulk (it reaches seven feet in height and thirteen in length, which exceeds that of the elephant, Hirz.), or, more probably, to its unequalled strength, a point directly bearing upon the argument touching the feebleness of man.

he that made him] The meaning of this clause appears to be, the hide of the beast is impenetrable by the sword of man. The interpretation is confirmed by an inscription in the Museum of Boulak, which belongs to the time of Tothmosis III., contemporary with or earlier than Moses; (see 'Essay on Egyptian History' in Vol. I. of this work). It runs thus, "the tepi (*i.e.* hippopotamus), the lord of terrors in the water, which man cannot approach unto." Brugsch, 'Dict. H.' pp. 1635, 6. The renderings of Ewald "Yet his Maker blunts his sword," and of Renan, "His Maker hath given him his sword," *i.e.* the huge tusks, are strained and unsatisfactory. Merx alters the text, following the LXX. and renders the clause, "is he made to play with?"

20. *the mountains*] The meaning of this verse is probably that the herbage of whole mountains is required to supply his food, but that he does not use his immense force to drive away the cattle, who feed and even sport when he is there. Thus Tristram, l. c. "he searches the rising ground near the river for his sustenance, in company with the animals of the land."

21. *the shady trees*] Or, **the lotus-trees**, the lotus silvestris, or Cyrenaica, which grows abundantly on the hot banks of the Upper Nile; it is of moderate height, with thorny branches and fruit like plums. See Note below.

23. *Behold*, &c.] **Behold, if a river ravageth, he trembleth not; he is stedfast, if the Jordan burst upon his mouth.** The word "ravageth" means literally "does injury" *i.e.* by overflowing its banks. The ravages of the Nile when the inundation is unusually high are terrible. In 1864 the whole country was submerged—the cattle destroyed, and the villagers all but ruined. The quiet confidence with which the heavy brute bears the rush of the formidable inundation may be contrasted with the terror and flight of beasts of prey. The mention of Jordan is unexpected; it would almost seem to have been used as a common noun: whether any writer but a Palestinian would have so used it is uncertain; but it may possibly have been a generic term for a river with a rapid current and subject to sudden increase. If the Jordan be meant it is certainly out of place (whether the writer were a Hebrew or not) in a description, which in all other points is singularly true to local colouring; and it may therefore be no improbable conjecture that Jor, the Egyptian word which signifies the Nile, or one of its canals, stood originally in the text, and was changed by a copyist into the more familiar word Jordan.

24. The meaning is not quite certain. Ew. renders the verse, "They take him before

his eyes, his nose is pierced with cords:" with allusion to the ease of his capture out of the water. Others, on the contrary, prefer, "Can one take him before his eyes, can his nose be pierced by cords?" This seems to suit the general context, which draws out the inability of man to cope with the great works of the Creator: but representations of the capture both of the hippopotamus and the crocodile are common on Egyptian monuments of the remotest age; see Note on *v.* 15. The trident of the hunter was hurled against the *nose* of the hippopotamus. Cf. Eg. 'Zeitschrift,' 1868, p. 18.

NOTES on CHAP. XL. 15 and 21.

15. Jablonski ('Opp.' I. p. 52, ed. Te Water) observes, that Pehemou, or with a final t, Pehemout, signifies properly "a water-ox:" but this combination is open to grave, and indeed insuperable objection. The final "t" is not admissible; the word is not found in Coptic, and did it occur it would be mou-ehe, not ehe-mou; nor does the Hippopotamus appear to have been called a water-ox by the ancient Egyptians, who, among other names, gave it the more suitable designation, *rert*, *i.e.* a beast that rolls in the mud, as swine; see Brugsch, 'Dict. Hiéroglyphique,' p. 867. It is very frequently represented on monuments from the earliest times; for instance, in the very remarkable tomb of Tei, an officer of high rank under the 6th dynasty, and in a good representation of a fishing party under the 17th or 18th dynasty (*i.e.* earlier than Moses), in the 27th livraison of the great work by M. Prisse d'Avennes. The name there given to it  is transcribed "Cheb" by Brugsch ('Dict. H.' s.v.). Birch ('Dict. Hier.' p. 381) follows Champollion, who reads "Bechama," and identifies the word with Behemoth. (See 'Notice descriptive,' p. 315.) This is probably incorrect, since the order preferred by Brugsch is borne out by other inscriptions, and the last syllable is doubtful: it may represent a sickle, which has the form of the letter "m" in Egyptian, referring, as Brugsch supposes, to the shape of the beast, but more probably to its teeth, with which it mows, so to speak, the herbage, as with a sickle, ἅρπη, the word used by Nicander and Nonnus. See also Wood, quoted by Dr Tristram. The resemblance, whether accidental or not, is curious and interesting. The more common names of the beast in Egyptian are Apet, tep, tepi, or rert.

21. The identification of the plant rests on the Arabic ضال, which seems questionable. Freytag 'Lex. Ar.' s.v. renders it "arbor, quæ remota a fluminibus nonnisi pluvia rigatur, *aliis* lotus." In old Egyptian the word *zar* or *zal*, which corresponds very closely with the Hebrew, means branches, or foliage; see Brugsch, 'Dict. H.' p. 1677. The Coptic is ϫⲱⲱⲗⲉ, vindemia. This appears a probable derivation.

CHAPTER XLI.

Of God's great power in the leviathan.

CANST thou draw out [1]leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord [†]*which* thou lettest down?

2 Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

3 Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft *words* unto thee?

[1] That is, *a whale, or a whirlpool.*
[†] Heb. *which thou drownest?*

CHAP. XLI. **1.** *leviathan*] The word, which properly means a large creature, lithe, or folded, may apply either, as in iii. 8, to a dragon, see note; or, as in Ps. civ. 26, to a whale; or, as in this chapter, to the crocodile; a point upon which all commentators are now agreed. This interpretation rests upon the accuracy of the description, which, though highly poetical, is neither legendary nor hyperbolical: see Tristram, 'Nat. Hist. of Bible,' p. 251. The name does not appear to be of Egyptian origin, although the root may be connected with *rer* or *lel*, to roll; but it is a curious coincidence, that the very common and well-known Egyptian name of the crocodile Meseh, or Emsah (Copticè Meseh, corrupted by the Greeks into Chamse, and by the Arabs into Temseh), is certainly derived from a root which means "to draw out," and is used in the first verse of this description. It is common to Hebrew and Egyptian

The marg. rendering "a whale, or a whirlpool," is curious; but by the latter word the translators probably meant a large fish, such as the cacholot or sperm-whale. See Eastwood and Wright, 'The Bible Word-Book,' Zencke's 'Select Glossary,' p. 226.

The second clause should be rendered, **or fastenest thou his tongue with a cord?** literally, "sinkest his tongue in a noose?" The crocodile does not, like other saurians, thrust out its tongue, which adheres closely to the jaw.

2. The Egyptian process of fishing is

4 Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

5 Wilt thou play with him as *with* a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

6 Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?

7 Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears?

8 Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.

9 Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not *one* be cast down even at the sight of him?

10 None *is so* fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?

11 Who hath prevented me, that I should repay *him?* [a]*whatsoever is* under the whole heaven is mine.

12 I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.

13 Who can discover the face of his garment? *or* who can come *to him* ‖with his double bridle?

14 Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth *are* terrible round about.

15 *His* †scales *are his* pride, shut up together *as with* a close seal.

16 One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.

17 They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.

18 By his neesings a light doth

[a] Psal. 24. 1 & 50. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 26.

‖ Or, *within.*

† Heb. *strong pieces of shields.*

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exactly described. These two verses evidently imply that the huge crocodile was not, and could not, be taken. Hence it may perhaps be inferred (as by Ewald) that this passage must have been written at a very early age, since long before the time of Herodotus crocodiles were captured by the natives. There were, however, many species, five are now counted by naturalists, and the hieroglyphic notices indicate a still greater number. The leviathan of this chapter describes the largest and most formidable of all, probably one which no one dreamed of attacking in Job's time.

4. *a servant for ever?*] Like domesticated animals, the crocodile may be partially tamed, but cannot, of course, be put to any use. The phrase refers to Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17.

6. *companions*] Fishermen in Egypt formed a caste, or guild, hence they are called fellows, or companions.

make a banquet] Or "traffic."

merchants] Lit. Canaanites, *i.e.* Phœnician merchants; cf. Isai. xxiii. 8; Zech. xiv. 21; Prov. xxxi. 24.

7. The process here described is now, and has been for ages, commonly employed in taking or destroying crocodiles; but see note on *v.* 1.

9. *the hope of him*] Or "his hope." The hope of man that the animal may be caught. Merx has a totally different, but very improbable rendering of this passage.

10. This, and the two following verses, point the application of this second discourse. If God's creatures are so great, what must be the terrors of His majesty?

11. *prevented*] *i.e.* made Me a debtor; hence it follows that all God's dealings with His creatures are of pure grace, proceeding wholly and exclusively from His will. We might expect this to be the conclusion of the discourse, but the minute and detailed description which follows accords with the genius of Hebrew poetry, which delights in close observation of God's works, and it was calculated to deepen and complete the impression already made.

13. *discover the face of his garment?*] The translation is literal, but the meaning might be more distinctly brought out. **Who can lift up, as a veil, his outside covering?** *i.e.* who can detach its tough scaly covering? **or come within his double bridle?** *i.e.* the double row of teeth: cf. Homer's ἕρκος ὀδόντων: and χαλινός used of a serpent's teeth by Nicander, 'Ther.' 234. The two most prominent characteristics are the scales and the jaws, which are dwelt upon in the eight verses following.

14. *his teeth*, &c.] Or, **round about his teeth is terror**. The neck of the war-horse is clothed with terror, so terror has its permanent abode in the jaw of the crocodile. Cf. Tristram, p. 260.

15. *scales*] Or, "grand is the channeling of his shield-like scales;" yet this does not give the force of the original, which personifies the impression, and for "grand" has pride. The scales, fitting close together, and marked by ridges like the rough banks of mountain-torrents, may seem to realize the attributes of pride and grandeur. Tristram observes, "a rifle-ball glances off from them as from a rock."

shine, and his eyes *are* like the eyelids of the morning.

19 Out of his mouth go burning lamps, *and* sparks of fire leap out.

20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as *out* of a seething pot or caldron.

21 His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.

22 In his neck remaineth strength, and †sorrow is turned into joy before him.

† Heb. *sorrow rejoiceth.*

23 †The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

† Heb. *The fallings.*

24 His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether *millstone.*

25 When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves.

26 The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the ‖habergeon.

‖ Or, *breastplate.*

27 He esteemeth iron as straw, *and* brass as rotten wood.

28 The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.

29 Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.

30 †Sharp stones *are* under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.

† Heb. *Sharp pieces of the potsherd.*

31 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

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18. *neesings*] Ancient naturalists speak of the neesings of the crocodile, a natural effect of the burning sun upon the animal as it lies basking on the sand-banks: the play of the sun's rays upon the spray thrown from the nostrils must have struck the close observer of nature.

his eyes] The flashing eyes of the crocodile as it lifts its head out of the water at sun-rise, produced so strong an impression upon the Egyptians, that they adopted them as the symbol of morning. The following passage from Horus, first quoted by Bochart, is the best illustration: "To denote the rising of the sun, they draw two eyes of a crocodile, since the eyes of the animal rising out of the deep water appear before its whole body." The coincidence is remarkable, whether we suppose or not that our writer may have noticed the representation on Egyptian monuments.

19. This verse undoubtedly gives the impression of a close observer, and though in a poetical form it is without exaggeration. Bochart sums up the descriptions of ancient naturalists who observed the beast rising after a long submergence in the water, "Then the breath, long suppressed, rushes out with such violence that it would seem to vomit out flames from its mouth and nostrils."

20. *smoke*] Bartram gives a similar description of the American alligator: "a thick vapour streamed forth from its widely-opened nostrils, with a noise which seemed to shake the earth."

22. This translation but imperfectly expresses the magnificent personification of the original, "On his neck dwelleth Strength: before him leapeth Horror." Horror, or despair, is described with a terrible irony as exulting in the presence of its lord. We are reminded of the Arabic name for the Sphinx, Abou 'l haul, "father of terror:" see also the passage quoted above, xl. 19.

23. *The flakes of his flesh*] Even the parts, which in most animals are loose and flabby, in this brute are compact and firm.

24. *firm as a stone*] This too is an exact observation: the heart of hot-blooded animals is liable to sudden contractions and expansions, producing rapid alternations of sensations; not so the heart of the great saurians, with their cold sluggish circulation and imperfect physical development. Thus Bochart and older naturalists, whose observations are confirmed and explained by modern physiology.

25. *When he*, &c.] Or, **Heroes tremble at his grandeur, they are confounded by breakings**, *i.e.* lose their presence of mind when he breaks and crushes all the weapons which they use against him.

29. *Darts*] Or "a club."

30. *Sharp stones*] Rather, **Splinters of potsherd** (*i.e.* sharp scales) **are under him; he spreadeth a threshing dredge on the mire.** This completes the description; even the belly, in other animals smooth and unprotected, is covered with sharp-edged scales, and the impression left upon the mud-banks where he basks is that of a heavy dredge.

31. Lastly comes the movement through the water: the images are exact, the chief object of oriental descriptive poetry, which aims at definiteness and life, regardless of conventional notions of dignity: the immense size of the beast, and the impetuosity of his movement, throws the whole stream into violent commotion, it seethes and heaves like a caldron of boiling oil. Such an image would have been chosen by Dante.

32 He maketh a path to shine after him; *one* would think the deep *to be* hoary.

33 Upon earth there is not his like, [1]who is made without fear.

34 He beholdeth all high *things*: he *is* a king over all the children of pride.

[1] Or, *who behave themselves without fear.*

CHAPTER XLII.

1 *Job submitteth himself unto God.* 7 *God, preferring Job's cause, maketh his friends submit themselves, and accepteth him.* 10 *He magnifieth and blesseth Job.* 16 *Job's age and death.*

THEN Job answered the LORD, and said

2 I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* [1]no thought can be withholden from thee.

3 [a]Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

[1] Or, *no thought of thine can be hindered.*
[a] ch. 38. 2.

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the sea] So the Nile was then, and is still, commonly called by Orientals.

32. The last clause compares the water covered with foam to gray hair. An apt and dignified figure.

34. *beholdeth*] *i.e.* coldly, sternly, without emotion.

children of pride] The same words which in ch. xxviii. 8 are rendered "lion's whelps." Here they mean all mighty beasts of prey,

What impression was such a description calculated to produce? We must remember the profoundly religious and serious character of the eastern patriarch. When images were presented to his mind, which spoke of tremendous power, and purposes utterly beyond his conception, he could have no thought but of his own nothingness. It never entered into his spirit to doubt of God's wisdom; but when he reflected upon the marvellous care, which God bestowed upon every part of an animal so utterly useless to man, he must have felt that the goodness which was to him but another word for perfect wisdom, must be something far different from that which in his narrowness and presumption man is wont to assume. It is not necessary to suppose that words developing each of these details reached his outward sense; a view which can scarcely be reconciled with a true conception of the Deity, and involves very serious consequences in its bearings upon the relations between science and revelation. What the writer intended us to feel is, that a mind, in which the facts furnished by careful and lively observation are interpreted by a spiritual process, by God's words addressed to the inward sense, learns at once the truths on which the deepest religious convictions, and the soundest judgment of the relations between God and man, are based. Every minute detail becomes interesting and affecting viewed thus as a matter of human consciousness, quickened by God's Spirit, and issuing in the highest practical results.

CHAP. XLII. 2. This verse recognizes two attributes, omnipotence and omniscience, "no thought is withholden from Thee," a better rendering than that in the margin. Job does not learn a different truth from that which he held previously, but he learns it in a different way; he realizes it spiritually together with its consequences, and therefore no longer presumes to judge of the fitness or unfitness of any dispensation which proceeds from the Infinite and inconceivable Godhead.

3. The first clause of this verse refers to the opening of the Lord's address. Job brings it distinctly before his mind, and recognizes its justice; clear and bright as his own reasoning had seemed to be, it was but a darkening of counsel. The LXX. follow a somewhat different reading. "For who is there that hideth counsel from Thee? Or sparing words thinketh that he can be hidden from Thee?" But the Hebrew yields a good and forcible meaning.

therefore] *i.e.* because I see now that I was, as that reproof intimated, without true knowledge, I uttered, &c.

4—6. Thus again Job repeats and meditates on the words. He confesses now that he had not really heard God's word before, *i.e.* received it in its full meaning; it was, so far as regarded the special cause of his spiritual trial, as though he knew it not; it was a mere hearing with the ear of sense, now he sees God with the eye of the spirit, now he can see himself in his true proportions, and submits with utter humiliation of heart.

Does this imply that he now surrenders his righteousness, thus doing just that which it was the object of all the temptations of Satan, and of his misjudging friends, to induce him to do? Yes, in one sense, inasmuch as he no longer holds to it as a principle on which he may trust in controversy with his Maker; but not in the sense which was contemplated by the author of those temptations, for Job knows that his relative righteousness,

6 Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.

7 ¶ And it was *so*, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is* right, as my servant Job *hath*.

8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for †him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your* folly, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is* right, like my servant Job.

† Heb. *his face*, or, *person.*

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted †Job.

† Heb. *the face of Job.*

10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD †gave Job twice as much as he had before.

† Heb. *added all that had been to Job unto the double.*

11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

13 He had also seven sons and three daughters.

14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.

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sincerity of intention and singleness of heart, is recognized by God, and proved by His condescension in answering and satisfying his inward craving. This is clear from the passage which follows.

7. *thy two friends*] Elihu is not mentioned, for reasons already assigned. The rebuke does not apply to him.

right] The difference was in the principle and intention. They spoke to defend a tenet, Job spoke to declare what he believed to be true; far as he was from reaching to the central truth, he was still comparatively near. The errors of the honest searcher after truth are better than the partial successes of the prejudiced maintainer of received opinion. Their great fault however was the breach of charity.

8. *pray for you*] The highest function of the priesthood thus devolves on Job: a true type of the Mediator.

10 *turned the captivity*] A saying which early became proverbial among the Israelites, whose whole national history was a series of deliverances: but it may well have been one of very early origin, and familiar to other kindred races.

when he prayed for his friends] As though that act, the crown and consummation of goodness, was the immediate cause of his reward: it may be that while he prayed all traces of his terrible malady disappeared, and his frame was arrayed with the "purple light of youth;" his flesh becoming like that of a little child, and his countenance beaming.

11. *his brethren, and all his sisters*] They had forsaken him in his adversity, as he complains with exceeding pathos in the 19th chapter, 13—19; attributing their alienation to God's displeasure.

a piece of money] The word here used (kesitah) is far more ancient than shekel. It occurs in Gen. xxxiii. 19, and in Joshua xxiv. 32; but in no later book.

an earring] Or nose-ring; see note on Gen. xxiv. 47.

14. The names indicate great beauty and grace both of person and character. Jemima resembles the Arabic (*yemama*) dove, and probably has that meaning; cf. Song of Sol. i. 15, "Behold thou art fair, thou hast dove's eyes." It is, however, more generally derived from *yamim*, days; pure and bright as the day. Kezia, *i.e.* Cassia, sweet and gracious as the aromatic plant, best loved in the East; cf. Ps. xlv. 8, and Song of Solomon. iv. 12—14.

Keren-happuch] *i.e.* a horn or vase of pigment; used in the most ancient times for enhancing the beauty of the eyes. It is mentioned by Jeremiah, iv. 30. The group of Semitic nomads in the well-known representation at Beni-hassan bring vases of this

15 And in all the land were no women found *so* fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations.

17 So Job died, *being* old and full of days.

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pigment as a tribute or offering to the governor of the Egyptian province.

15. *gave them inheritance*, &c.] This would have been contrary to Hebrew custom, which allowed daughters to inherit land only when there were no sons in the family: see Num. xxvii. 8. Traces of the names of the three daughters have been sought in Arabia, but the ingenious conjectures of Mr Forster, 'Geography of Arabia,' rest on very insecure assumptions.

The length of days and unexampled prosperity granted to Job should not be regarded as a compensation for sufferings, but as the outward and visible indications of divine favour, of which the future manifestation was as yet a matter of hope rather than of sure belief founded on revelation.

To the close of the book a passage is appended by the LXX., which is interesting for various reasons. "It is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord raiseth." This shews the very natural impression made by the concluding chapter. The statement also that "This book is translated from the Syriac," has some value, and may rest on ancient tradition. The genealogical notices which follow are without value, save as the earliest known indications of the legendary accounts of Job and of his family, which are found in Arabic commentaries on the Koran, Sur. xxi. 83, and xxxviii. 40; on which see Sale's notes, Vol. II. pp. 162 and 322. The notices in the 21st Sura adhere pretty closely to the Scriptural narrative, those in the 38th have a fanciful interpolation, probably due to Mahomet or his Jewish teacher: "Remember our servant Job, when he cried unto the Lord, saying, Verily Satan hath afflicted me with calamity and pain. *And it was said unto him*, Strike *the earth* with thy foot: which when it was done a fountain sprang up, and it was said unto him, *This is for thee* to wash in, to refresh thee, and to drink. And we restored unto him his family, and many more with them, through our mercy; and for an admonition to those who are endued with understanding. And *we said unto him*, Take a handful of rods (or of rushes, as a mere symbol of punishment) and strike *thy wife* therewith; and break not thine oath (sc. which he takes to punish her for her evil counsel). Verily we found him a patient person; how excellent a servant was he! for he was one who frequently turned himself." Sale. The last words should be rendered "a sincere penitent." This passage is quoted both as shewing the strength and permanence of the impression made upon the oriental mind by the history, and because the last word in Arabic, "avvab," is held by some critics to be the true origin and meaning of the name Job: see note on ch. i. 1.

PSALMS.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *Introductory Remarks.*

NO portion of the Hebrew Scriptures has transfused its spirit into the Christian Church more completely than the book of Psalms[1]. The first Christians seem to have found in it an adequate expression of their deepest feelings[2]. Eliciting its spiritual meanings, and interpreting its doctrinal teaching under the light of a perfect revelation, they adopted the Psalter as the foundation and the model of their devotions, retaining its most striking characteristics for many centuries in their hymnody[3]. Thus too in the churches of the East and of the West, from the time of their separation to the present day, all lyrical expression of religious thought and feeling seems, so to speak, an echo or adaptation of the strains of the "sweet Psalmist of Israel."

For this result there are obvious and sufficient reasons. Of the book of Job it has been observed that it differs remarkably from all other productions of the Hebrew mind: of the Psalter, on the contrary, it is true that it exhibits more fully and exactly than any book the peculiar characteristics of the Israelites. It represents a spiritual state, which, with all its grave defects, was

[1] As an illustration it may be observed that the total number of direct quotations from the Old Testament in the New is 283; of these 116 are from the psalter. A similar proportion is found in citations by most of the early Fathers.

[2] Christian education in Syria began with the psalms. Thus Assem. T. III. p. 7. 937, "Tirones primum psalmos Davidicos legant; deinde Novum Testamentum, mox Vetus."

[3] A full account of the use of psalms and hymns in the early Church is given by Bingham, Vol. IV. p. 420—472. See also Rheinwald, 'Die Kirchliche Archäologie,' § 96. The earliest extant hymn of the Christian Church is that of Clement of Alexandria, 'Pæd.' 5. 12, p. 311, ed. Potter. Like the hymns noticed by Pliny, 'Ep.' 97, it is an act of adoration to the Son of God.

singularly susceptible to religious impressions, capable of receiving and reproducing communications from a higher sphere. Nor is there any book in ancient literature, profane or sacred, which shews so wide and perfect a sympathy with man in his weakness, and in his strength, in his joy, and in his sufferings. Deep humility and oneness of mind with the poor are traits, of which scarcely a shadow is found in the lyrical poetry of those Gentile nations, which attained the highest degree of culture: as expressed in this book they present a direct contrast to the characteristics of Hellenic genius. The Psalmists one and all, but none so perfectly as David, to whom the book owes its traditional title, while opening their own heart with all its depths of agony and earnestness of aspiration, give full expression to the yearnings of mankind. We find, however, throughout a combination of feelings elsewhere unknown, or imperfectly developed; a deep sense of inherent sin and unworthiness, together with a consciousness of integrity in purpose and intent; a full recognition of a standard of morals and holiness, so perfect as to involve the condemnation of the sinner, yet withal a loving trust in the mercy and grace of the lawgiver and judge: in short a true preparation for the special work of Christ.

And independently of these characteristics, which attract the spiritual instinct, the book is full of interest to men of every form of intellectual culture. The scholar and the poet, the philosopher and the historian, find in it ample materials for thoughtful study. Connected probably by one psalm (Ps. xc) with the dawn of the national life, its most important compositions belong to the period when that life was fully developed; when it rose by a single bound to the summit of power and real greatness, from which indeed it speedily declined, but which left undying reminiscences in the national mind. Upon that epoch, and on its productions, David has set his royal seal. His character, singularly gifted, stands out in vivid portraiture, in its light and in its dark shadows; forcing an interest by turns of admiration and sympathy, of anxiety and surprise. And second only to the great national hero, men of genius, Solomon, Asaph and the Korahites, record the feelings of the best portion of the people through the varying phases of their fortunes; the splendour of the Solomonian age, the long years of chequered vicissitudes which intervened between that period and the Babylonian captivity, the deep depression and intense yearnings of the exiled people, and their mingled sorrows and gladness after their partial restoration. At each period questions of permanent interest touching the destinies of man, and the relative claims of morality and religion, are discussed, if not finally settled: nor has poetry of any age shewn a fuller appreciation of nature in all its moods, in its majesty and in its sweetness, in its terrors and in its repose: thronged, as it were, with multitudinous forms of life, the atmosphere in which the Hebrew lyrist[1] moves is bright with one all-pervading light, which gives a meaning and an object to them all.

No book has been so fully commented on: the literature of the psalms makes up a library. Nearly all the great Fathers of the Church have contributed volumes of exposition. They were chiefly concerned with the spiritual and practical bearings, and laboured for the most part under the disadvantage of ignorance of the Hebrew, and disregard both of the literal meaning and historical connection, yet special interest attaches to their labours: their minds are in real inner sympathy with the Psalmists; and with the quick apprehension of Greeks and Latins, developed by careful training, such men as Origen, Eusebius, Basil and Chrysostom, Hilary, Ambrose and Augustine, readily seized the clues to the sequence of thought and feeling. Jerome, however, stands out among them as the true father of exegetical and critical commentary. The interpretation of the psalter owes more to him than scholars are wont to recognize: he combined a fair knowledge of Hebrew with an acute judgment and strong practical sense. Mediæval Christianity did good service in its way; but, following closely in the track of the Fathers, it effected little for the exe-

[1] Compare Euripides, 'Medea,' 826—830.

gesis and criticism of the psalter. With the reformation came a new epoch of light and life. Mercer and Calvin, entering at once with vigour upon the study of Hebrew, took a place which subsequent labours have not superseded: in fact a literature so copious soon sprang up that, continued and amplified by a succession of industrious critics, among whom Rudinger, Venema and Agellius hold the foremost place, it threatened to become useless from its very extent. We owe to Rosenmüller a full and judicious presentation of the most important results of previous labours, including those of Rabbinical writers, especially Kimchi, Aben-Ezra, and Rashi, together with a well-considered, and on the whole a satisfactory, comment. Within the last few years numbers of able critics have bestowed great and successful labour upon the book. In Germany much has been done for the historical exegesis, and still more for the grammatical and philological elucidation of the psalms. The work of Hengstenberg, though somewhat defective in judgment, well deserves the high position which it holds in England and Germany. Delitzsch, inferior to no commentator in ability, and superior to most in oriental and general learning, combines a warm and deep sympathy with a keen appreciation of the Psalmists' tone of thought. Ewald brings his singular power of insight to bear upon difficult questions of interpretation; though his attempt to construct an historical sequence on internal evidence is generally and justly regarded as a failure[1]. The commentary of Hupfeld would approach near to excellence, were his historical and religious instincts on a par with his acute discernment in matters of philology and criticism. Hitzig holds a place of his own, deservedly high; but, though helpful to the scholar, he is wholly unsafe as a guide to the student. The brief commentary of Köster is chiefly useful for the light it throws on the structure of the psalms (see Appendix): that of Moll in Lange's 'Bibelwerk' is accurate, full of interesting information, and written in a devout and reverent spirit. In England the commentary of Mr Perowne is valuable both for its intrinsic merit, and as presenting in a readable form the results of German criticism, especially as developed by Hupfeld; that of Dr Kay is remarkable for independent research, and that of Bishop Wordsworth for varied and profound erudition. The late Dr Mill bestowed great labour upon this book; but the results have not been published. Among other commentaries accessible to English readers, those of Dr Phillips, Dr Jebb, and Canon Hawkins may be consulted with advantage; and special value must be attached to the 'Introduction to the Study and Use of the Psalms' by the late Rev. J. F. Thrupp.

§ 2. *Title.*

The general Hebrew title of the books is Tehillim, "praises," or "songs of praise;" or Sepher Tehillim, "book of praises[2]." This title, though open to

[1] The results of this attempt have been set before the English public by four scholars, who have divested it of much of its apparent harshness, and commended it by a graceful translation, and notes remarkable for conciseness and point. See 'The Psalms Chronologically Arranged, &c.,' by Four Friends, 2nd ed. 1870. But, as a matter of fact, it is certain that those results are far from approving themselves to Ewald's countrymen, none differing from him more widely in detail than those whose theological prepossessions come nearest to his own. The calm dispassionate judgment of Köster is that "Ewald's attempt to arrange the psalms in chronological order cannot lead to any positive results, a fact sufficiently shewn by the astounding divergences of hypotheses touching the age of the psalms," see 'Die Psalmen,' p. 7, note. And again (p. 15), "the extraordinary discrepancy between the historical interpretations of the psalter is of itself a strong warning (Warnungszeichen) not to mix up insecure hypotheses with what can be historically proved."

[2] תהלים, or תהלין, contracted to תלים or תלין, transcribed by Philo and Jerome, and commonly by early Christian writers, as tillim, tillin, tilli. The Masora uses the plural Sepher tehilloth, and the name Hallêla, but only in reference to one group of psalms, cxiii. to cxix. The word Shir (שיר), nearly equivalent to song, whether sacred or profane, expressing generally a festive or joyous feeling, occurs in the inscriptions of some psalms, but it is not used in the plural, nor is it applied to the whole book. At the close of Ps. lxxii. תפלות (tephilloth), "prayers," is used as the general designation of the preceding psalms which are assigned to David. This might naturally have had the preference as describing the devotional character of the psalms. In the singular it occurs as the inscription of the xviith psalm (where see note), and in the later books, as that of the lxxxvi, xc, cii, and cxlii: as also of the Song of Hannah.

objection as not being universally applicable, yet correctly and fairly expresses the great characteristic of the book, of which the supreme object is to declare the glory of God. The title by which it is designated in the New Testament, Luke xx. 42; Acts i. 20, and in all Christian versions, viz. ψαλμοί, "Psalms," or collectively, "Psalter," ψαλτήριον, is derived, through the Latin Vulgate, from the Alexandrian or Septuagint Version: the word corresponds in meaning to a title prefixed to several psalms (*e.g.* iii. iv. v. vi), in Hebrew *mizmor* (מִזְמוֹר). It refers rather to the form, as a poem to be sung with a musical accompaniment, than to the spirit, or religious character of the compositions; still it is a term which applies equally to all, and it expresses the connection with liturgical services, while any original deficiency in spiritual significance has been supplied by its association with the devotions of the Church.

§ 3. *Division.*

The psalter is divided into five books, each of which is distinctly marked by a doxology at the close; that at the end of the fifth differing from the others only in extent. This division is of great antiquity, certainly older than the Alexandrian Version: the doxologies may have been added when the collection of the whole, or of a considerable portion, sc. of the first two books, was completed. The resemblance between this division and that of the Pentateuch has been long since remarked, as by Hippolytus and Epiphanius ('De Mens. et Pond.' c. 6). Thus, too, in the Hebrew Midrash on Ps. i. 1: "Moses gave the five books of the law to the Israelites, and, as a counterpart to them, David gave the psalms consisting of five books." It is important as bearing independent testimony to the antiquity of the corresponding division of the Mosaic work. Delitzsch supposes that it may point to an internal harmony between the fivefold enunciation of the law, and the fivefold response of the national heart; a suggestion which, though somewhat fanciful, rests upon a just appreciation of the characteristics of the Pentateuch and the Psalter, which together complete the representation of the principles and feelings of the ancient Church.

Each of these five books has very distinct characteristics. The first contains 41 psalms: one of these is introductory, and may have been prefixed together with the second, when the original collection was made, not improbably by Solomon himself, or by one of the School of Levites: two others, the 10th and 33rd, have no inscription; the 10th, as it would seem, being a continuation of the 9th psalm; the 33rd, for some unknown reason, it may be by an accident in transcription: thirty-seven are assigned to David; an assignment which, as will be shewn in the following notes, is in most cases sufficiently justified by internal evidence. The name Jehovah is used constantly, though not exclusively, throughout this book.

The second book has thirty-one psalms, xlii—lxxii. The first seven are attributed to the sons of Korah, or eight, if we include the 43rd—which, however, is a second part of the 42nd: one, the 50th, to Asaph; eighteen to David; two are anonymous, lxvi. lxvii (see notes); and one is ascribed to Solomon. In this book the inscriptions are remarkable for the general fulness of the historical notices. The name Elohim occurs so frequently as to be a marked characteristic. The doxology at the close of Ps. lxxii. combines the two names, Elohim and Jehovah, in a form which may possibly have been intended to point out the characteristics of both books.

The third book, of much less extent, contains but seventeen psalms, lxxiii—lxxxix. Eleven are attributed to Asaph; four to the sons of Korah, interrupted, however, by Ps. lxxxvi, which is entitled "A prayer of David;" one of the four, lxxxviii, bears also the name of Heman; one, lxxxix, that of Ethan. The liturgical character of this book is marked by musical terms in the inscriptions. As will be shewn in the notes, the historical references are weighty and numerous. The divine names Jehovah and Elohim are used with nearly equal frequency.

The fourth book has seventeen psalms, xc—cvi. One bears the name of Moses; ten are anonymous; the last five are

ascribed to David. The name Jehovah is used throughout.

The fifth book is the largest in extent, containing forty-four psalms, cvii—cl: the first is anonymous, the three following (cviii—cx) are attributed to David; three are anonymous, and have the word "Hallelujah" in place of an inscription; six are without name or inscription (cxiv—cxix); fifteen (cxx—cxxxiv) are called Songs of Degrees, of which one (cxxvii) is ascribed to Solomon, two (cxxxi, cxxxiii) to David; one, cxxxv, is called "Hallelujah," A Psalm of Praise, and the two following are anonymous; eight (cxxxviii—cxlv) bear the name of David; the last four begin each with the Hallelujah, and form a complete doxology. The name Jehovah predominates, but not to the exclusion of Elohim; the proportion is fairly represented in the closing psalm, in which Jehovah occurs twice, and Elohim once.

On the formation of the psalter, see § 14.

§ 4. *Authorship.*

The first question which presents itself, and to which all others touching the origin and form of this collection are subordinate, touches the authorship of the several psalms. From the preceding analysis it will be seen that the old and canonical tradition of the Hebrews assigns more than two-thirds to authors: seventy-three to David, two to Solomon, twelve to Asaph, twelve to the sons of Korah, one to Ethan, and one to Moses. Forty-nine are anonymous.

If, therefore, the authority of the inscriptions were admitted, the question so far as regards one hundred and one psalms would be settled; but serious doubts have been raised, and are still entertained, by critics; and we have to inquire, first, what grounds there are for impugning or maintaining that authority; and secondly, what kind or degree of evidence is supplied by an independent examination of the psalms.

It is scarcely necessary to dwell upon the much later, but very prevalent, tradition which assigned the whole psalter to David. It is true that the psalms are quoted in the New Testament under the name of David, but it is admitted that this title merely bears witness to the customary language of the Hebrews in our Lord's time, and is justified by the axiom, "a potiore fit nominatio." There are indications of such a usage in the second Book of Chronicles (xxiii. 18), where the psalmody of the temple is assigned in general terms to David, either as the orderer, or, as the Hebrew[1] probably signifies, the chief composer. From a notice in the 2nd Maccabees (ii. 13) it is evident that at that time the psalter was known as the Book of David (τὰ τοῦ Δαυίδ), and that the collection, bearing this general title, was believed to have been completed by Nehemiah. Rabbinical writers generally[2], and many Christian Fathers, accepted this title without hesitation or inquiry. At present no theologians consider it as a tenable position: indeed they could not do so without disregarding plain statements, not only in the inscriptions, but in numerous psalms.

§ 5. *On the Inscriptions.*

Before we consider the objections raised against the inscriptions in general, attention may be called to these points. (1) It was to be expected a priori that lyrical compositions would bear some inscription, designating the author. Each of the psalms or metrical compositions in the Pentateuch has some distinct notice both of the author, and of the circumstances under which it was produced. See Gen. iv. 23, xlix. 1, 2; Exod. xv. 1; Deut. xxxi. 30, xxxiii. 1. Thus too in Judges, the Song of Deborah; in Samuel, the hymn of Hannah (Judg. v. 1; 1 S. ii. 1); the lamentation of David, 2 S. i. 17; his pæan, &c., ch. xxii. 1, and his last words, ch. xxiii. 1, have special and complete inscriptions.

The Song of Hezekiah again, although it occurs in the middle of a book, where the context sufficiently explains the occasion, has a formal inscription, resembling those which are prefixed to many of the psalms, viz. "the writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness." Isai. xxxviii. 9. Such, more-

[1] על ידי דויד, lit. by the hands of David, which may mean as appointed by David, or as composed by him.

[2] Talmud, 'Pesachim,' c. x.

over, was the all but invariable custom of the prophets, not only as a general heading of their predictions, but for detached portions, especially those of a lyrical character, which were intended for separate recitation, as for instance, Isai. ii. 1, xiii. 1; Habakkuk iii. 1. In fact, it would be less difficult to account for the presence of a distinct title, than for the omission of one, in those psalms, which on that account the Talmudists call "orphans," or fatherless.

(2) Again, there is no probability that a title once given by the author, or the first collector, would be intentionally changed. It was not the custom of antiquity to invent, or materially to alter, such designations. Errors of transcription, omissions or displacements might occur; but all ancient nations, the Hebrews more especially, had a religious reverence for traditions touching the great names of their ancestors: what they received they transmitted, to the best of their power intact and unchanged, to their children.

We must, however, bear in mind that, useful and important as these inscriptions may be, they are by no means indispensable: the subject-matter of the psalms, their doctrinal and practical bearings, may be elicited without such aid: and critics of very different schools have admitted that the authenticity or accuracy of each inscription may be fearlessly discussed without impugning the authority of Holy Writ. The variations of the inscriptions in the Septuagint and other ancient versions sufficiently prove that they were not regarded as fixed portions of the Canon, and that they were open to conjectural emendation: on the other hand, the fact that they were to a great extent unintelligible to the writers of the LXX. is a conclusive evidence of their antiquity.

The first suggestion of doubt appears to have been made by Theodorus of Mopsuestia, a man of great ability, whose latitudinarian tendencies were shewn in far more important questions. Since the publication of a treatise by Vogel[1], the general tendency of German criticism until very lately has been unfavourable to the authority of the titles. Some of the ablest critics disregard them altogether. Hupfeld holds them to be wholly worthless, for the most part mere conjectures of uncritical collectors. On the other hand, their general trustworthiness and value are firmly maintained by German critics certainly equal in learning and honesty of purpose to their opponents, as for instance, Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Keil, and Delitzsch, whose work 'Symbolæ ad Psalmos illustrandos isagogicæ,' 1846, has a standard value. Critics again, who occupy a middle position, while admitting the force of objections in the case of certain psalms, unhesitatingly reject the sweeping conclusions of Hupfeld and his party. Thus Bleek holds that in the case of many inscriptions there is conclusive evidence of very great antiquity, especially in reference to events which are either not recorded, or differently related, in the historical books. Moll again, one of the very latest (1869) and ablest commentators, asserts, that on the whole the result of laborious research has issued in a far more favourable estimate of the age and character of these inscriptions.

At present we may confine our inquiry to the authorship of those psalms, which bear the names of the writers, more especially those which are ascribed to David: proceeding in the first place to a consideration of the internal characteristics.

§ 6. *Characteristics of David's Psalms.*

A considerable number of the psalms are recognized by critics, with very few exceptions, as belonging severally to distinct periods in David's personal history. They have peculiarities of thought and style, which go far towards determining both the authorship, and the date; they abound in allusions to local or temporary circumstances; and they indicate progressive stages in the development of a character, which stands alone in its combination of vigour, dignity, and grace.

§ 7. *Psalms of the first period of David's life.*

The following may be ascribed, some without hesitation, others with a high degree of probability, both on the evidence of the ancient inscriptions, and on that of internal indications, to the period

[1] The work is quoted by Moll in Lange's 'Bibelwerk,' 'Inscriptiones psalmorum serius demum additas videri,' 1767.

of his youth, or early manhood, first at the court of Saul. then during his exile, whether in the wilderness, among the Philistines, at Gath, or Ziklag, up to the close of Saul's reign.

vii. viii. (?) xi. xii. xiii.
xvi. (?) xvii. xxii. xxiii. (?)
xxxiv. xxxv. lii. liv.
lvi. lvii. lix.

The most striking characteristics recognized for the most part by critics in those psalms, which they severally accept as belonging to this period, may be classified under the following heads.

1. Consciousness of innocence. This feeling is more strongly expressed in the early psalms of David than in any Hebrew composition: it continues unbroken up to his great fall; after that crisis it is never found without some distinct limitation, as a relative innocence, with reference to accusations of his enemies, or to the discharge of public duties. It occurs in broad general terms in those psalms which are admitted to be the earliest of his extant poems; he describes himself as "upright in heart," vii. 10, xi. 2; as righteous and loved by the "righteous Lord," xi. 7. This righteousness he specially dwells upon as thoroughly tested, tried and approved by God, to Whom he directly appeals as a witness of his integrity, cf. vii. 3, 8, 9. He describes himself as just to all, not only kind to his friends, but actively beneficent to his enemies, vii. 4, xxxv. 13, 14: and he attributes his persecutions to malice unprovoked by any fault or iniquity, vii. 3—5.

2. This feeling is connected with intense devotion, shewn especially in absolute trust. The first word in both psalms, which critics regard as his earliest productions, is an expression of trust; vii. 1, "O Lord my God, in Thee do I put my trust;" xi. 1, "In the Lord put I my trust." Compare the psalms which the inscriptions assign to this period; at Gath, lvi. 4 and 11; in the cave, lvii. 1; and on the night before his flight, lix. 9, 10, 17. This feeling indeed is not peculiar to the early psalms, but in them it is specially associated with consciousness of freedom from guilt.

3. A strong sense of personal dignity. The first expression of this feeling occurs in the seventh psalm: David already speaks of his "honour," *v.* 5; the word is very strong in Hebrew, implying dignity and weight; it occurs frequently in his later psalms, when it refers generally to his kingly rank: but the feeling of personal nobleness is characteristic of David: from his first entrance on public life he knew himself to be a peculiar object of divine favour, with a high and special vocation, and he felt in himself powers and gifts (which, however, he is careful to attribute to God's love, see xviii. 32—36), such as would enable him to perform the work entrusted to him. No similar feeling is shewn by any other Psalmist, nor, to the same extent, by other Hebrew writers. It is in fact the consciousness of an election, which marked David from youth onward as a type of the Messiah.

4. This feeling again is connected with others, which appertain partly to David's earnest and impulsive temperament, partly to an early and imperfect state in the development of ethical and spiritual principles. The Hebrews generally felt and expressed bitter enmity towards those by whom they were harshly and unjustly treated; but by no other writer is this feeling expressed with such force and variety. He compares his persecutors to lions, to savage beasts, xxxv. 17; he describes their malice, their ferocity, their craft and treachery, vii. 14, 15, xi. 2; their calumnies, vii. 3, xii. 2, xxxv. 11, 20, lvi. 5, lvii. 4; their pride, xii. 2, 3, lii. 1, 7, lix. 12; their sensuality and insolence, xvii. 10, xxxv. 16; above all, their utter ungodliness, xii, lii. 7. We find anticipations of the utter ruin of the persecutors, lix. 7; they are continually the objects of God's wrath, vii. 11, Who will rain upon them snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; xi. 6. Such anticipations are characteristic of psalms in the second book, which the inscriptions assign to David's youth, *e.g.* lv. 15, 19, 23; lvi. 7, 9; lvii. 6; lix. 11; compare the words of David, 1 S. xxvi. 19. A careful examination of the expressions used in the psalms now in question will satisfy the reader that they bear strong marks of individuality, and of feelings, if not wholly peculiar, yet specially appropriate, to the circumstances and character of David in his youth. Compare 1 S. xxvi. 19.

5. The imagery in these psalms, if not peculiar to David, has yet characteristics which bring his personality vividly before our minds, and help us to realize his position and feelings. They abound in references to warfare; the Psalmist's mind is constantly occupied by thoughts of strife and battle, the onset, the desperate struggle, the sudden defeat, the shout of victory. In his earliest psalms we have the wicked in ambush, bending his bow; but detected and discomfited, falling into his own pit, slain by his own weapons: Ps. vii. 15, 16. To David God is specially present as a God of battle, wielding the spear and the sword, taking hold of shield and buckler (Ps. xxxv. 1—3); as Himself the Psalmist's Shield, or more commonly his Rock, his Fortress, his Stronghold, images specially connected with the dangers and escapes of David's exile. All these figures recur constantly in these psalms, but are comparatively rare in those which are attributed to other composers. Other images belong rather to David's experience as shepherd. The love of nature is not as yet shewn in conscious reflections, unless indeed we attribute the eighth and the twenty-third psalms to David's youth: but, as might be expected in one at once so full of genius and so actively engaged, it is manifested spontaneously and naturally in vivid portraiture of all that passes before him; forms of grace and beauty; wild beasts tearing, rending, or crouching, and then rushing on their prey; storms and tempests alternating with sudden flashes of light, and with scenes of peaceful loveliness. We have before us the early stage in the formation of a mind susceptible to impressions, which will find fuller utterance in later years.

6. The characteristics of David's early style are so strongly marked, that they are discernible even through the veil of a translation. The English reader will not indeed recognize the archaisms of word and construction, which chiefly attract the attention, and determine the judgment, of critics: it may suffice here to state that, in the great majority of these psalms, they are numerous and unquestionable. But the suddenness and abruptness of the transitions, the complete predominance of feeling over external form, the elasticity of a spirit which feels every blow, and recoils instinctively from pain, yet at once recovers itself, putting forth new powers and overcoming with little effort all impediment and opposition, these and similar indications of genius of the highest order in an early process of development force themselves upon every mind capable of appreciating and sympathizing with them. Attention may also be called to the metrical structure, which, as will be presently shewn, has some marked peculiarities in those early psalms.

§ 8. *Psalms of the second period, between his accession to the throne and his great sin.*

On grounds partly stated in the commentary the following psalms may be more or less confidently attributed to this period.

viii. ix. x. xv. xvi. xvii. xviii.
xix. xx. xxi. xxiii. xxiv. xxvi.
xxix. xxxvi. lviii. lx. lxviii.
ci. cviii. cx.

With David's accession to the throne a noticeable change, not indeed of direction, but of progress and development, comes over his spirit.

We observe in the first place that the spirit of devotion, ever increasing in earnestness and warmth, and expressed in terms of tender affection (see note on xviii. 1), has now a kingly character. The key-note is struck in the two psalms (xv, xxiv) which were recited when the ark was transferred to Jerusalem. David proclaims Jehovah as King of glory, and Lord of Hosts, attributing all past triumphs to His might; His dominion extends over the whole world, of which He is at once the Creator and Lord; a declaration of special importance, made just at the time when a local and permanent sanctuary was inaugurated. Warfare has a religious significance; but acceptance with Jehovah, and all access to His Presence, are determined exclusively by moral and spiritual qualifications. As a subject David had protested against deceit, slander, corruption and oppression; as a king he proclaims the expulsion of the guilty from the Tabernacle and the Holy Hill. In two other psalms, which probably belong to the same period, we have the same strain of thought: in the twenty-sixth David ex-

presses his own determination to keep aloof from the sins thus specially designated; in the hundred-and-first he announces his resolve to suppress them in his kingdom, to drive away the froward, to cut off slanderers, to destroy the wicked, and "cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord." The great outburst of devotion comes in the eighteenth psalm, which exhausts the experience of his early manhood. The reader will note, as characteristic of David, the accumulation of appellatives at the beginning (1, 2); his unshaken confidence in the midst of dangers (3—6); his realization of the might and majesty of God, Whose interposition is described as a Theophany, in language full of vivid perception of the grandeur of natural phenomena, and of the living Power to which they owe their true sublimity (7—15); the constant reference of all deliverance to Jehovah (16—18) is combined with a distinct consciousness that it depends upon a faithful discharge of all kingly duties (20—24). In this psalm we find the first intimation of consciousness of sin (see note on *v.* 23): on the other hand, a singularly full description of personal qualities, speed, force, elasticity, and indomitable energies, which however he ascribes entirely to the favour, and—a very remarkable word—the gentleness of the Lord (*v.* 35). As might be expected, the sense of dignity finds fuller expression at this period; it takes a different form, and rises into a higher sphere. The king feels that he occupies the position to which he had been called, and for which his qualifications had been tested and approved, and now for the first time recognizes the fact that it involves headship over the heathen (43), and a vocation to be teacher of the world; see note on *v.* 49, and compare ix. 8—11. We find indeed the same feeling of burning indignation which characterized his early psalms; it is equally strong, but less personal; it is directed against the ungodly (4), against traitors (18), oppressors (27), and foreign enemies (37—45).

The style of this period differs to some extent from that of David's youth. In some psalms the construction is difficult, owing chiefly to archaic forms; but, as a general rule, the flow of language is fuller and easier, the transitions less frequent and less abrupt: the eighteenth psalm, indeed, of which the authorship is not open to question, has a certain diffuseness, which may partly be accounted for as suitable to a liturgical, and probably a processional hymn, which would necessarily occupy a considerable time in the recitation; but for which a still more satisfactory reason may be assigned, if we regard the gradually increasing length of each successive portion, which gives a peculiar character to the structure of this grand Pæan, as a fitting expression of a heart overflowing with gratitude, and stirred by the remembrance of countless blessings.

§ 9. *Third period, from the fall of David to his flight.*

v. vi. xxxii. xxxviii. xxxix. xl. xli. li. lv. lx. lxiv.

In this series the change comes suddenly, even as the temptation of David and his fall. One psalm, the fifty-first, sets the king before us, and bares his heart in the crisis of his agony, in the depth of an abasement unparalleled in the records of God's servants. Yet in this psalm the old characteristics of devout trust in God (1, 14), of consciousness of a high vocation (11, 13), of generosity and unselfish patriotism (see note on *v.* 18), of a spirit at once impressionable and elastic, feeling to its inmost depths the wrath of God, but sustained by an ineradicable sense of union with Him, make us feel that we have the same man, whose teaching (see *v.* 13) will, like that of St Peter (cf. Luke xxii. 32), be henceforth more persuasive and heart-converting, full of sympathy and experimental knowledge, flowing from "a broken spirit" and "contrite heart." The same strain pervades all the psalms of this period: in no psalm to the end of David's life do we find the early consciousness of innocence: in none is there an absence of the sustaining influence of God's free Spirit. We trace the course of David's inner life, and of the outward events by which his sin was at once punished and corrected. In the notes on these psalms it will be shewn that some (xxxii) were probably written soon after his repentance; contrasting the bitterness of past

struggles with the blessedness of restoration. At a still later period we find again indications of renewed suffering, doubtless connected with the misery caused by the guilt of his children; the thirty-eighth psalm introduces a series, extending to the end of the first book, in which spiritual and physical prostration, outward calamities, successful machinations of conspirators headed and guided by one arch-traitor, the confidant and bosom friend of early years, are represented in strains full of vivid imagery and intense feeling. Such are the characteristics of other psalms probably belonging to the same interval (v, lv, lviii); yet even the fifty-fifth, which gives a full portraiture of his inner sufferings, and of the circumstances which endangered and afflicted him most sorely, breathes a spirit of hopeful prayer, and winds up with the key-note of his earliest psalm, "but I will trust in Thee."

§ 10. *Psalms written probably at the time of his flight, or before his restoration.*

iii. iv. xxvii. xxviii. xxxi.
lxi. lxiii. lxix. lxx. cxliii.

Of these the sixty-third is probably the earliest, composed on the morning after the flight from Jerusalem: it illustrates most remarkably the characteristics, so often noted, of susceptibility to all impressions, and elasticity; in none indeed is the contrast more strongly marked; by a sudden rebound the king rises at once to a joyous consciousness of God's continued help, and of his own salvation. Here too the indignation against traitors, which in youth had been intensely personal, in middle age dignified and kingly, assumes a prophetical character; see notes on *vv.* 8, 9. The same feelings breathe in the sixty-first, written probably after crossing the Jordan; and in the twenty-seventh, which appears to have been composed shortly before the decisive battle: the remembrance of past guilt haunts David, *v.* 9; but all other thoughts are swallowed up in the certainty that he would be lifted up, offer sacrifices of joy, and see again the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. The psalm winds up with the old strain, adapted to his actual circumstances, "Wait, I say, on the Lord."

§ 11. *Psalms belonging to the last period of David's reign.*

To this period may probably belong those psalms in which the didactic character predominates: in none is the identity of spirit with the productions of youth and early manhood more conspicuous than in the 139th; in none is there a more perfect development of the noblest and most spiritual elements of David's nature. An intense realization of God's immediate and all-pervading presence, issuing in a consciousness of his own dependence and security; a feeling, not, as in early youth, of natural innocence, or, as in mid-life, of accepted penitence, but of a heart cleansed and renewed, and a life at last clear from every wicked way (24); a spirit at once humble and confident; a lively appreciation of the majesty and preciousness of God's purposes manifested in His works and dealings with man: such are the great thoughts in this psalm: and it is to be noted that, while we have the last, crowning form of the old ever-recurring strain of indignation and perfect hatred of the wicked, it is here grounded wholly on the sense of their antagonism to God. See *vv.* 21, 22 and compare 2 S. xxiii. 6, 7. The spirit of Ps. ciii., which is attributed to David, points to the same period: chastened, pardoned, healed and perfectly restored, the Psalmist calls on all creatures of Jehovah, all His works in all places of His dominion, to join in blessing Him.

As a general result it may be fairly maintained, (1) that by far the larger number of the psalms, attributed to David in the inscriptions, bear the characteristics which are most prominent and most peculiar in those, which critics, who accept any psalms as Davidic, unhesitatingly and unanimously ascribe to him. (2) Those characteristics are pointed out by critics in reference to psalms about which they differ most hopelessly. Psalms, which Ewald rejects or assigns to very late periods, are fixed upon by Hitzig, Köster, and others, as bearing undoubted marks either of extreme antiquity, or of the personal experience and character of David. (3) It is quite possible that some which bear the name of David underwent alterations, probably in order to adapt them to the

liturgical services of the temple, with additions suggested by the circumstances of the times; and that others may have been compiled from different psalms. The preposition (ל) "to," or "of," or "for," does not necessarily imply that the psalm was actually written by the person to whose name it is prefixed. (4) The difference of style between psalms attributed by the most advanced critics to the youth or early manhood of David, is a point of great importance in this inquiry. It is admitted that while, as a general rule, they are replete with archaic forms, obsolete words, and difficult constructions, impetuous in movement, and rapid in transitions, yet that several of them are remarkable for easy flow of thought and language. This applies not only to psalms written respectively before or after his accession to the throne, but to different psalms of each period. It might be inferred that psalms written towards the close of his long reign, after the settlement of the political affairs, both foreign and domestic, or under the shadow of approaching death, would differ to a far greater extent from earlier compositions. We might expect to find a deeper tone of thoughtfulness, as in Ps. cxxxix, a calmer and more sustained air of majesty, as in Ps. xxxvii; and a special adaptation of his teaching to the wants of his people and his own children: hence perhaps the gnomic character of such psalms as xxv. and cxlv. It cannot indeed be shewn that alphabetic psalms bearing the name of David belong altogether to this period; some of them (ix. and x) have the characteristics of his earliest style; yet it is a form which would commend itself specially to an aged teacher of the people, anxious that each precept should be fixed upon their memory, and writing with the facility of long practice. Even in the latest psalms brightness and splendour of imagery, warmth and promptness of sympathy, alternating with burning indignation, shew that the great Psalmist retained his character and genius unclouded to the end.

§ 12. *Psalms attributed to other authors.*

The question as to the authenticity and date of psalms, attributed to Moses, Solomon, Asaph, the sons of Korah, Heman and Ethan, will be discussed in the commentary briefly, yet with reference to modern criticisms. Here it may suffice to state that the internal evidence is admitted in many of these psalms to be probable, if not conclusive. Even in the ninetieth psalm, which presents most difficulty (see the note on *v.* 10), Hupfeld and other critics recognize a special fitness to the character and circumstances of Moses. The psalms of Asaph are indeed generally regarded as the products of various times, and some may have been written by a descendant of this contemporary of David and Solomon bearing the same name; but it is certainly possible, and in the opinion of the writer very probable, that psalms referred by some to the captivity, by others to the period of Hezekiah, were written either towards the close of David's reign, as the seventy-eighth; or in the beginning of Solomon's, for recitation in the temple; or at the time of the Egyptian invasion under Shishak, as the seventy-fourth, seventy-ninth and eighty-ninth. The psalms assigned to the sons of Korah may extend over a longer space; some belong apparently to the time of Hezekiah (*e.g.* xlviii. and lxxviii); but there are good, if not conclusive, reasons for connecting some with the period of David's exile, *e.g.* xliii. xliv, and others apparently with events under the early kings of Judah.

A large proportion of psalms in the last two books (Pss. xc—cl) undoubtedly belong to the period during or following the exile. It will, however, be shewn in the notes on Pss. xc—c. that several of these, to which critics have assigned this or a later date, were more probably composed before the overthrow of the first temple. The psalms written during the exile are not numerous, but deeply interesting, *e.g.* Ps. cxxxvii: those written later are partly gnomic, as cxix, partly liturgical; some, called Songs of Degrees (cxx—cxxxiv), of singular beauty, probably in part adaptations of ancient hymns (see notes on cxxiv. and iv, cxxxvii, cxxxi, cxxxiii), are supposed by some critics to have been written specially for the use of worshippers on their way to the sanctuary at the annual festivals[1]. It is also possible that the

[1] See, however, the remarks in the introduction to Ps. cxx.

psalms attributed to David in the last book may have been reconstructed, or modified for recitation in the second temple (compare Ps. xcvi. with 1 Chro. xvi): some of these are remarkable for grace and vigour (*e.g.* ciii, cxxxviii), and others bear internal evidence to the correctness of the inscriptions.

§ 13. *Psalms which have been referred to the Maccabean age.*

We have now to deal with the question whether any, and, if any, which psalms could have been written in the age of the Maccabees. At various times critics and theologians of high character have held that some undoubtedly belong to that period, and were probably introduced into the canon when the collection was made by Judas Maccabeus; thus we read in 2 Maccabees ii. 14, "In like manner also (sc. in the same way as Nehemiah had done), Judas gathered together all those things that were lost by reason of the war we had, and they remain with us." This assumption in itself should not be regarded as indicating any tendency to scepticism; though the spirit in which it has been supported, and the extent to which it has been carried, are open to grave objection. Hitzig in the latest edition of his commentary (1863—1865) assigns the whole of the three last books (*i.e.* from lxxiii) to the Maccabean period: while Olshausen and Lengerke deny that any single psalm is incontestibly David's, and assert that by far the largest portion of the book is Maccabean. Still, limiting the assumption to certain psalms which are supposed to bear internal evidence of Maccabean origin, it has been favoured by critics who fully believe in the inspiration of Holy Scripture and in the authenticity of the Davidic psalms. Thus Calvin regarded three psalms, xliv, lxxiv, lxxix, as possibly Maccabean; Venema (1672—1677) assigned thirty-four psalms to that period; and he was followed by Dathe and Mutinghe. Within the last half century the question has been sharply contested, and in some instances on both sides with an entire absence of doctrinal prepossession. Thus Delitzsch accepts the theory within certain limits, and among its strongest opponents are such critics as Ewald, Gesenius and Bleek[1].

The following arguments appear on the whole conclusive against the assumption.

1. Even from the notice in the book of Maccabees, it is clear that Judas Maccabeus is stated simply to have gathered together books which had been lost; so far following the example of Nehemiah, but not, like Nehemiah (see *v.* 13), adding writings of his own or of his contemporaries. There is no reason to doubt that the collection, substantially in its present form, existed at that time. Bleek holds that it cannot be proved on any sufficient grounds that a single psalm in our psalter is later than Nehemiah, who lived 300 years before the Maccabees.

2. There are indications, held by critics, *e.g.* Bleek and Hupfeld, to be all but conclusive, that the doxologies at the close of each of the five books of the psalter existed when the book of Chronicles was written; see 1 Chro. xvi. 36. It is certain that that book was completed in the 4th century B.C., and that it was received into the canon, at the latest, when the collection was made by Judas Maccabeus.

3. There are no intimations in the books of Maccabees that any writers of that time were regarded as inspired, nor are there any traces of a national outburst of lyrical poetry; it was emphatically an age of fierce action, such as indeed has often produced poets, but which, as often, absorbs all energies in its desperate struggles. Had a poet at that time given a voice to the national feeling, or roused the national spirit by utterances claiming prophetic inspiration,

[1] Ewald has the following remark in his Preface to the second part of his last edition (1866) of the Psalter. "Nothing can be more untrue and more perverse (verkehrter) than the opinion that there are any Maccabean psalms at all in the psalter, and now forsooth the greater part of the psalms (are assigned to that period); nay, some even to the last century before Christ, as compositions of the utterly dissolute Hasmonean king Jannæus!" p. 9. This refers specially to Hitzig, who supposes that Alexander Jannæus composed several psalms, among them the first, the second, and the hundred-and-fiftieth; and that he finally settled the order of the psalms, the division into five books, and the reception of the whole into the Canon.

it is scarcely probable that all traces of his influence or of his very name should have been obliterated from the remembrance of his people.

4. Among critical objections to the hypothesis, the most convincing rests on the style. The style of those psalms which are most confidently asserted to be Maccabean is pure, noble, dignified, differing in no respect, either in language, metrical structure, tone of thought, or variety and beauty of imagery, from the best age of Hebrew poetry. There is indeed no extant document to shew to what extent the language had been modified at that age; but there can be no doubt that it was already most seriously affected by foreign influences and those not exclusively Semitic; and that it had undergone an internal process of deterioration, or possibly of assimilation to its original stock. The earliest extant documents between the close of the canon and the time of our Lord indicate the increasing influence of Aramean; of which there are unquestionable traces in the later canonical books.

The complete refutation of this hypothesis must of course depend upon the true exegesis of the psalms themselves: this has been kept in view in the commentary upon those psalms which are claimed most confidently by its supporters. It will be shewn that while a highly probable date can be assigned to the 44th, 74th, and 79th psalms, the internal evidence is conclusive against the Maccabean theory.

§ 14. *Formation of the Psalter.*

The questions at what time and under what circumstances the psalter was brought into its present form, and by what principle the arrangement of the psalms in each portion was determined, cannot be answered confidently. Some points however stand out clearly, and for others probable reasons may be alleged.

It may be taken for granted that no additions or material changes were made after the collection by Judas Maccabeus. It may be also regarded as all but certain that Judas Maccabeus handed down without alteration the documents which he collected. There is every reason to accept, no substantial reason to question, the statement that the collection was extant, or at the utmost completed, in the time of Nehemiah, when it is probable that the liturgical psalms at the end were affixed.

We may admit that the last collector finally settled the form of the psalter: yet there is reason to believe that he adhered on the whole to previous arrangements, both of the books, and of the psalms in each book. A regard for tradition, a profound, not to say superstitious, reverence for antiquity, especially in regard to works which were ever regarded as emanating from divinely inspired writers, are characteristics of the Hebrew race.

Judging by internal indications we may be justified in assuming that the first book was arranged substantially in its present form soon after the accession of Solomon. It is not likely that Asaph and his colleagues, who then presided over the liturgical services of the temple, would have neglected the transcription of David's psalms. The second book may have been added to it soon afterwards: but the peculiar character of the inscriptions (see p. 149), and the use of the divine names, indicate a different redaction. Both may be best accounted for by assuming that the second book was arranged with a special view to recitation in the temple, under the guidance of Solomon, or of the leaders of the Levitical chorus[1]. The arrangement of the psalms in these two books is certainly not chronological throughout. Indications of a special purpose may be pointed out. The introductory psalm stands apart, and was perhaps written by Solomon. It is not without a meaning that this collection is set in between two psalms of kingly consecration; whether, as Ewald supposes, the second psalm was written by Solomon, or, as seems more probable, by David; the seventy-second psalm, beyond doubt, refers to Solomon. Probable reasons for the place of other psalms may be

[1] The notice at the end of the seventy-second psalm distinctly marks one epoch in the formation of the psalter. The words "The psalms of David the son of Jesse are ended," could not possibly have been written by the reviser of the last two books, for they contain several psalms ascribed in the inscriptions to David.

assigned on the assumption that they were arranged with special reference to the temple service. Thus the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th are fitted severally for recitation at morning and evening. Yet, allowing for such transpositions, an order of time may be discerned in the first book: from the 8th to the 13th we have psalms of David's youth; from the 14th to the 21st of his early reign; while the later psalms in the first book belong, with few and doubtful exceptions, to the troublous times preceding his flight from Absalom. The psalms in the second book may have been written within the same period.

The third book appears to have been collected in a later reign, not improbably in that of Jehoshaphat. Strong reasons are given by Mr Elliott, see pp. 507—512, shewing that the greater number of psalms in the fourth book were probably composed before the close of Hezekiah's reign. It is expressly said that Hezekiah "commanded the Levites to sing unto the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer:" 2 Chro. xxix. 30.

The last book contains several psalms of the age of Ezra or Nehemiah, but many also which bear the name of David. It is impossible to say from what sources the latest collector drew these psalms, most of which have characteristics which leave little doubt of Davidic authorship, while some are of surpassing beauty.

§ 15. *The Psalter, considered in its bearings upon the development of Doctrine in the Hebrew Church.*

In this place it may suffice to bring together some general principles, which will be illustrated by the following commentary.

Three great points call for separate consideration: (1) the ethical or spiritual teaching of the psalter; (2) the aspect under which it contemplates the doctrine of retribution, a point which involves the question of a future life; (3) the direct prophecies, or typical foreshadowings and anticipations of the Messiah.

§ 16. *Ethical teaching.*

1. Comparing the teaching of the Psalter with that of the Pentateuch, and the earlier historical books, we feel little hesitation in asserting that it indicates a considerable advance in the appreciation or exposition of ethical and spiritual truth. It is indeed true that no new principles of morals, strictly speaking, are introduced; but the development of principles previously recognized, and their application to a great variety of characters and circumstances, prove that the consciousness of spiritual men had been more thoroughly penetrated, and more completely moulded, by them. This observation applies not only to the psalms recognized as Davidic, but, with at least equal force, to those attributed to Asaph, and to the Korahites, and to those Psalmists who lived during or after the Babylonish captivity.

Among these principles none is more striking than the due adjustment of the inward and the outward; the spiritual work, and the devotional expression, of religion. This adjustment is effected, not by any restraint imposed upon either, but by giving free play to both; the spirit is encouraged in its highest flights of ecstatic rapture, and the devotional feelings are most intimately connected with the services of the sanctuary. This combination comes out at once in the earliest psalms of David; we have in his first words (whether we take the 11th psalm with Ewald, or the 7th, as the first fruit of his genius) the expression of unshaken trust, faith as the support of spiritual life, evinced in uprightness of heart (vii. 10, xi. 1, 2), associated with mention of the sanctuary (xi. 4). Thus, again, David takes the occasion of the inauguration of the tabernacle on mount Zion (an event which he celebrated with an unprecedented multitude of sacrifices, and all the formalities of ceremonial observance) to inculcate the fundamental principles of morality, above all purity of heart, as the conditions of acceptance (see notes on xv, xxiv). At the crisis of his fall, in the agony of his repentance, truth in the inward parts is recognized as God's great requirement; while the sacrifices of righteousness are reserved for the season of acceptance (see notes on li. 19). Throughout his psalms David expresses intense delight in all holy seasons, services, and observances, fervent longing when separated from the tabernacle for a season (lxi, lxiii); he is never weary of extolling

the grandeur, beauty, and heart-controlling influences of the sanctuary; but he dwells with far higher rapture upon the heavenly realities, of which these are significant adumbrations; secure of God's love, joying in God's presence, reposing on His protection, whether in his flight from Saul, or in conflict with foreign enemies, or in the period of deepest humiliation, of bodily and mental suffering. xxxi. 22, lxiv. This characteristic above all marks the psalms of the Korahites, and of the chiefs of the Levitical choirs, Ethan, Heman, and Asaph. In these we remark on the one hand an enthusiastic love of the temple, and a burning thirst for the privileges of outward communion; see xlii. 1, 2, xliii. 3, and lxxxiv. 1, 10, a psalm which, above all others, gives the portraiture of a loving ministrant in the temple, like good spirits in Dante ('Paradiso,' Canto III. 63—93), rejoicing in the lowest place: but, on the other hand, these psalms contain the very strongest declaration to be found in the Bible of the absolute worthlessness of all ceremonial observances, of sacrifices and burnt-offerings, though offered in obedience to the law, and in perfect accordance with the declared will of God, excepting so far as they are expressions of a heart purified by repentance, eschewing evil, and full of gratitude for spiritual grace; to him only "who orders his conversation aright" will He "shew the salvation of God." See Ps. l. 7—12, 16, 23.

This fact calls for very special attention; it shews the groundlessness of the assertion that there existed an antagonism between the priestly and prophetic orders. David indeed may be regarded as a representative of both, not as priest or prophet in the strictly formal sense, but as combining the spiritual characteristics of both offices; but Asaph and the Korahites belong by birth, and calling, by taste, feelings, and habits, to the class of ministrants.

The qualities which characterize David have been already considered: though in some respects peculiar to him, yet in great part they belong to other Psalmists; such, for instance, as intense zeal, calling for the utmost severity of God's judgments against the heathen, yet with a view to the conversion of the world; Pss. lxxxii. 8, lxxxiii. 18, lxxxvii. 4—6: compare notes on Ps. xviii. 43, 49; and Ps. cxlv. 21.

The ideal man, considered apart from the realization in Christ, as portrayed by the Psalmists, has these characteristics: unshaken trust in God, entire devotion to His service, submission to His will, reliance on His love met by a corresponding affection, a more than filial tenderness (xviii. 1); a longing for His presence in the sanctuary, and for fruition of that presence in heaven; a thorough appreciation of the righteousness of all His dispensations; a confident, nay certain, anticipation of a full manifestation of His righteousness. Faith, hope, and love assume thus their true relative position in the development of the spiritual man.

On the other side we find single-heartedness, transparent truthfulness, utter absence of guile, purity of heart as the centre and mainspring of moral life: justice, fortitude, self-control, rectitude in dealings between man and man: generosity, Ps. vii. 4, sympathy with all forms of suffering, warm and tender towards friends, but ever prompt and earnest towards all men, even opponents, Ps. xxxv. 13: loyalty of subjects to their king, unselfish self-sacrificing love of princes to their people. Here too, not for the first time, but in a higher degree than ever, and with a singular nearness to the Christian ideal, we remark the grace of humility: the sense of poverty and need: the first distinct intimation that a broken heart and contrite spirit are acceptable sacrifices to God, Ps. li. 17, and that the meek and lowly are especial objects of his favour and grace, Ps. xviii. 27.

The ideal is not as yet perfect; not to speak of its imperfect realization, it wants some essential graces, graces however of which no heathens felt the need, which they neither desired nor appreciated. Such are love of man extending to enemies, entire abnegation of self-righteousness, the permanent sense of unworthiness, and above all unlimited forgiveness of injuries, the extirpation of the bitter root of hatred and revenge. Yet even for these greatest and most special characteristics of the Saviour's teaching, there is a preparation, a foreshadowing,

often interrupted, yet never wholly broken off, which enables Christians to use the psalter both in private and public devotions without misgiving, and with deep thankfulness for the help which it supplies to the spiritual life.

§ 17. *Notices of a future state.*

2. Closely connected with these characteristics are the feelings and hopes of the Psalmists touching a future state. It is clear on the one hand that no distinct revelation of a future state of retribution had as yet been vouchsafed to the Israelites. It is indeed certain—our Lord's authority makes it certain—that the truth was implicitly contained in God's manifestation of Himself as the God of Abraham and the fathers; and also that Patriarchs of old looked upon life here but as a pilgrimage (Heb. xi. 13, compare note on Ps. xxxix. 12). Still we cannot reasonably doubt that to the generality of the people the grave, or the unknown Sheol of which the grave was the entrance, bounded the region of hope and fear: whatever they might conjecture touching the state after death, few indeed appear to have distinctly realized it as a state of consciousness, or one to be followed by restoration. It has been shewn in the introduction and notes to Job, that the problem had exercised the spirit of early thinkers; that a great stride had been made towards its solution; that the writer of that book at least felt that attempts to vindicate the righteousness of God would be futile, were it left unsolved; and that in the agony of the death-struggle, when all other hope was finally abandoned, the conviction sprang up that God would manifest Himself in some unknown way as the Redeemer. But the hope, as was there shewn, was after all but vague and subjective; little more than a preparation of the soul which entertained it, for a future disclosure of the truth.

It will be admitted that in no other book but Job earlier than the Psalms is this question distinctly raised: if indeed that book were relegated to the age of Solomon, or a still later age, it had not hitherto been raised at all. We have to inquire what position with reference to this doctrine is taken by the Psalter.

It would be easy to settle the question were we to decide it by reference to the very numerous passages, in which the state of the departed is represented as one of darkness, where there is no "remembrance of God," where "He is not praised," neither loved nor dreaded. On looking at those passages carefully, we may indeed find reason to conclude that they speak of the condition of those who are the objects of divine punishment, or that they express the fears of one, who regards himself as having incurred the divine displeasure: still it is true on the whole that they leave an impression of a final triumph of death, of the annihilation of consciousness. "Man returns to his dust and all his thoughts perish:" such apparently even towards the close of the psalter is the deliberate judgment of the latest reviser. Ps. cxv. 17, cxlvi. 4.

But even in those psalms which contain such declarations in the strongest form we are struck by the expression of feelings which are wholly incompatible with the certainty of annihilation: in none are there more lively, joyous expressions of trust and hope (see especially the last half of Ps. cxlvi; and xiii. *v.* 3, contrasted with *v.* 5). Nor are those expressions in many instances to be explained as referring to the anticipation of a temporary deliverance from death, or to the postponement of a general and inevitable doom. The Psalmists speak of thanks to be offered to the Lord God for ever (xxx. 12, lxi. 8, cxlv. 1, and *v.* 21), of an eternal portion in heaven (xxxiii. 6), and of the end of the perfect and upright as peace (xxxvii. 37). In the very depth of humiliation and hopelessness so far as this life is concerned, God is called upon as helper, deliverer and redeemer, xl. 17, as "the Lord my salvation," xxxviii. 22; cf. lxxxviii. 1. The general judgment is regarded as a day when the wicked shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous (i. 5); as the morning of the eternal day when the upright shall have dominion over them (xlix. 14), when the righteous shall see the light, while the man who is "in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish," ib. 20.

It is true that in most psalms such passages, taken separately, can be denuded of their meaning; and critics, who have made up their minds on other grounds that the doctrine of a future

state was unknown to the Hebrews, find little difficulty in disposing of some texts as exaggerated representations of temporal hopes, and of others as figurative. It would be unjust to impute sinister motives, or even a deficiency of faith and reverence, to those who consider that the revelation of a future state was reserved for a later stage in the disclosure of the divine purposes, and that it was not authoritatively given before the coming of Him who brought life and immortality to light. Still, taking such statements in their combination and mutual bearings, as explaining, developing, and illustrating each other, it is strange that any should fail to recognize throughout the psalms a state of feelings and convictions which speaks of a deep, though it may be but half conscious, faith in the perpetuity of the soul, the light, the glory (xvi. 9), the spiritual principle of God's rational creatures. The soul will see "light in God's light," xxxvi. 9; "God will be its portion for ever," lxxiii. 26.

It may indeed be conceded that no objective revelation had as yet been vouchsafed. What the Psalmists believed or hoped for touching the future state in or after Sheol was, so far as we can judge, even to the last a subjective conviction. It may also be admitted that inasmuch as the psalms were, with few exceptions, intended for public recitation, popular in their character, and giving expression to general convictions, even while casting upon those convictions the light and warmth of a spiritualized intelligence, they are not likely to contain express intimations of a truth, which, if known at all as a truth resting on external communications, was known as such only to the few. All that we have a right to affirm touching the great bulk of the Davidic psalms, indeed of the whole psalter, is that there are throughout indications more or less distinct, sometimes faint, sometimes singularly bright and strong, of an undercurrent of feeling in harmony with the eternal truth, and with those undying and irrepressible aspirations. which God has implanted in souls bearing His impress, and susceptible of union with Him; a union which excludes the possibility of annihilation[1].

There are, however, some few psalms in which the lights diffused throughout the book are gathered up, and burn with a strength which extorts a somewhat reluctant, yet unqualified recognition even from the coldest of critics. Such especially are the sixteenth and seventeenth psalms. To whatever period we may be disposed to assign them, they bear witness to a perfectly developed consciousness of immortality in the writer. One of the sharpest critics (Hitzig), resting wholly on the internal evidence of language, style and indications of circumstances, assumes that they belong to the Davidic age, and in all probability to the early part of David's own life (see introd. to Ps. xvi. and note at the end of Ps. xvii). In that case they supply conclusive evidence of the existence of a deep-rooted belief at the time of the earliest collection. As we shall see presently, the psalm is Messianic: a fact which sufficiently accounts for the prominence which it gives to the thought of immortality. It is, moreover, evident that the writer was familiar with the book of Job, and that he especially refers to passages in that book which deal with the great problem of life. These are the positive statements, which, whether the Psalmist be speaking in the person of Christ, or giving expression to his own conviction, leave no room for doubt as to the full development of the hope. The Psalmist first speaks of his trust in God, of his exclusive dependence on Him, and declares that "Jehovah is the portion of his inheritance and of his cup."

[1] This thought is well expressed in a Sermon on eternal life, by M. Eug. Bersier, p. 244, "Au reste j'avoue qu'à côté de ces élans. de ces pressentiments de l'éternité, il y a chez les croyants de l'ancien Testament des doutes, des anxiétés, des incertitudes en présence de la mort. C'est l'âge crépusculaire encore; les ombres se mêlent partout à la lumière. D'ailleurs, cette lumière n'éclaire que les âmes d'élite qui sont comme les hautes cimes du monde spirituel." In the appendix to that sermon Bersier gives a condensed account of the views of German critics, which bear for the most part a striking resemblance to that maintained by the writer: thus he observes of Klostermann, "après un examen approfondi des textes (sc. of Pss. xlix, lxxiii, cxxxix), il conclut que l'espérance de la vie future, qui y est si vivement exprimée, n'est fondée ni sur une doctrine traditionelle, ni sur une révélation positive et directe de Dieu, mais qu'elle jaillit toute entière du sentiment d'une relation personelle du croyant avec Dieu, relation qui doit être eternelle comme Dieu même," p. 268.

Hence it follows that he can never be overthrown, that his heart and spirit are full of joy; and that even his flesh will rest in hope, for his soul will not be left in Sheol, nor will God's holy one see corruption: fulness of joy and blessedness for evermore will be his at the right hand of God.

In the seventeenth psalm, which was probably written when David was exiled from the court of Saul (see introductory note), we have a development of the same thought, which proves that even in early youth David had meditated deeply on the subject. He sees clearly that the course of the wicked in this life may be, and often is, one of unbroken prosperity: they have their portion, an abundant one, satisfying their greed; he takes up the thought of Job (ch. xxi. 7—11) and carries it a stage further; a joyous, careless, insolent life, spent in the midst of a prosperous and festive family, is terminated by a death, ofttimes sudden and painless (Job xxi. 13, 23; cf. Ps. lxxiii. 4), "and when they die they leave the rest of their substance to their babes." To set against this the Psalmist has only one, but that an all-sufficient support, "as for me I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." See note on xvii. 15.

§ 18. *Messianic Psalms.*

3. The question as to the extent and character of the Messianic intimations in the psalms is in some respects similar to that which we have just considered, but in others it differs materially.

It may be shewn that scattered notices and expressions occur in a great number of psalms, which have more or less a Messianic significance; which may indeed be explained without reference to our Saviour, yet find in such reference the most satisfactory elucidation: and again, that in some few psalms the Messianic features are brought out so strongly, that they are recognized by critics of every school, not excluding those who look on the hope as little more than a pious hallucination.

On the other hand, it seems clear that, whereas the hope of a future state rested rather upon subjective grounds than on objective revelation, the promise of a Messiah had been distinctly given, and that the doctrine formed an integral portion of the faith of the Hebrews.

In dealing with this question, however, we are beset by formidable difficulties. While all critics concur in the general recognition of Messianic hopes expressed by the Psalmists, they differ exceedingly as to the character and extent of this element in the book: nor does this difference exist merely between critics of opposite schools, but between many of those who are fully satisfied of the inspiration of the Psalmists, and who believe with St Peter (1 Pet. i. 11), and all Christian teachers, that the Spirit of Christ was in them and spoke by them (2 Pet. i. 21).

On turning to the ancient commentaries we find that the Fathers saw in every psalm distinct utterances of that Spirit. The Fathers did not indeed, as is sometimes asserted, hold that the individuality of the Psalmist, of David especially, was altogether suppressed; or that the words uttered by him did not give true expression to the movements of his own spirit; but they believed that they were overruled so as to become at the same time true utterances of the Spirit of Christ. That system did not always interfere with a careful and anxious study of the literal meaning: no one carries the system farther than Jerome in his commentary on this book, no modern critic has been more diligent in bringing all exegetical means within his reach to bear upon the interpretation; so that not content with the Latin version of the Septuagint he undertook a new and independent translation from the Hebrew, an attempt which drew upon him the sharp animadversions of such a man as Augustine. The system did however materially interfere with the historical interpretation, and tended to obliterate the striking evidences of individuality in the several Psalmists, and consequently of the authenticity of the psalms. It must be confessed, and ought not to be noted as a fault, that the early teachers of the Church, taking the psalms as helps and guides to devotion, and informers of the spiritual life in Christ, were too generally regardless of their primary and literal meaning. They lost comparatively little, and gained much which in this age it is hard to retain, in their intense

realization of that Presence, which, whether fully disclosed or dimly intimated, is the source and centre of the Psalmists' inspirations. With more or less of tenacity, with more or less of spiritual discernment, that system was held by all the great mediæval writers, nor is it wholly abandoned, or likely to be abandoned, by those to whom critical, literary, or exegetical considerations are as nothing in comparison with Christ. Were there indeed no alternative save that of rejecting the Messianic interpretation altogether, or of applying it throughout, few earnest Christians would hesitate to cast in their lot with those who accepted the latter: it would bring them nearer to the mind of the Spirit, and would in very many passages involve less strain upon the exegesis.

In fact this system, so far as its main principles are concerned, rests upon foundations which cannot be subverted without danger to the entire fabric of Christian doctrine; nor without disregarding some of the most obvious rules for the interpretation of contested documents.

It is well known that the Messianic interpretation of each and every psalm, which is claimed by the advocates of the system as directly and exclusively predictive of Christ, was received by the Hebrews long before our Lord's coming, and without any misgiving, or any trace of antagonistic opinion. The Rabbins, who are recognized as most faithful to old traditions, carry this system to quite as great an extent as the early Christian writers. A belief in Messiah founded upon the prophecies, and specially upon typical or direct predictions in the psalms, was one of the fundamentals of faith[1]. This point is not contested by any critics: they may treat it as a superstition, as a mere delusion, but the fact remains, and it is certainly without a precedent or parallel in the history of religions. We must also bear in mind that the system was retained for centuries after the Hebrew teachers were fully aware of the difficulty which it presented of carrying on the controversy with Christians. It drove them to curious and instructive shifts to evade the application. Sometimes they admit candidly that their only reason for relinquishing the traditional, and as they confess, the natural interpretation, is the use which is made of it by Christians. (See introductory remarks on Ps. ii.) Generally, however, they endeavour to explain away the application to our Lord by the theory of a double Messiah, each with characteristics, which to their mind are irreconcileable with the history of Jesus the Son of David; the one Messiah being the visible incarnation of majesty, beauty and might, the living Son of the living God, the image and reflection of the divine glory: the other, the descendant not of Judah, but of Joseph[1], smitten by God's wrath, rejected universally both by his countrymen and by the Gentiles, bearing as a scape-goat the sins and sufferings of mankind. With this system, they are able and willing to accept the twenty-second and other psalms, which depict the humiliation, anguish and death of Messiah, while they retain those which represent Him as King of Glory, and identify the Son of David with the Son of God, invested with the incommunicable attributes of Jehovah. Even at present the Jewish liturgies and ceremonial observances bear witness to the strength of the national faith in an atonement by the vicarious sufferings and sacrificial death of the Messiah[2], not less than in His glory and triumphs. That faith has been relinquished only by that portion of the nation, which combines antagonism to Christianity with utter rejection of the supernatural, and therefore the prophetic, element in their Scriptures.

As to the belief of the Jews of every

[1] *e.g.* It is the twelfth article in the 'Sepher rosh amuna' of Isaac Abarbanel.

[1] The passages bearing on this subject may be found at full length in the 'Pugio Fidei' of Raymond Martene, in Eisenmeyer, and in Schoettgen's treatise 'de Messia' at the end of his 'Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ.' Schoettgen has some good arguments (Tom. II. p. 365), which deserve more attention than they appear to have received, leading to the conclusion that the fiction of a second Messiah as the son of Joseph was a perversion of the New Testament account of His birth; it appears first to have obtained currency at a period when the Christian Church was fully settled.

[2] The latest, and in many respects most important, work on this subject is that of Wünsche, 'Die Leiden des Messias.'

class in our Lord's time no doubt is entertained. "Les croyances Messianiques," as a sceptical writer calls them, possessed the national spirit. Prophecies which appeared to be irreconcileable with each other, which indeed previous to their fulfilment could not be reconciled, were in every mouth. The writers of the New Testament quote them in reference to the events of our Lord's history without apology or explanation; nor did the Scribes and leaders of the people ever attempt to deny their bearing on the Christ. The ablest of all modern assailants of our faith holds indeed that these convictions were so definite and complete, that they produced an ideal form, which moulded the spirit of the early Christians, and issued in the representation of a Christ passing through suffering to glory.

If we put aside all consideration of the *authority* of these quotations by Apostles and Evangelists, we should still have a fact of unquestionable weight, proving that the interpretation was no after-thought, no development of general notions, but one which long preceded the application to the individuality of Jesus Christ.

But that authority, after all, is paramount and conclusive. It is the authority of Christ Himself. Christians, as such, are utterly precluded from the modern system of negative criticism. We have, on the one hand, applications of predictions in the psalms to His deepest humiliation, His betrayal, agony, and death; on the other, to His divine birth, His triumph over death and hell, His enthronement at the right hand of His Father. Keeping this as a primary condition, we may freely examine other questions, secondary in the highest sense, but of importance in the exegesis; (1) whether the psalms in general are to be regarded as Messianic; (2) whether again a considerable portion have a primary reference to David and other Psalmists, and a secondary one to Christ; and (3) whether any, and, if any, which psalms are directly and exclusively Messianic.

With regard to the first question, we remark that throughout the psalms two lines of thought are discernible: the same lines which run like threads of golden light through the texture of the ancient Scriptures. On the one hand, we have descriptions of the divine action, which bring God ever nearer and nearer to man, pointing ever more distinctly to a crisis of personal manifestation, by which the triumph of righteousness, the extirpation of evil, and the deliverance of the upright will be accomplished: and we observe that passages, in which this manifestation is most distinctly set forth, are claimed by the writers of the New Testament as directly connected with the Person and triumph of Christ.

At least we have here a general and pervading tone of Messianic anticipation.

On the other hand, there is a correlative elevation of humanity in the Person of a Representative, bringing it nearer and nearer to God. Passing through intense suffering, subjected to scorn, contumely and oppression, the ideal Head of the Theocracy rises ever higher and higher, reducing creation into subjection, ruling over Israel in righteousness, subduing and converting the heathen, extending His dominion to the world's end, recognized and enthroned as God's own Son on earth, and finally seated for ever in the fulness of divine glory on the right hand of God in heaven.

Wherever either of these two great lines of thought are discerned, and they run as a stream of light through the book, we have essential characteristics of Messianic inspiration.

Still when we pass from these general considerations to the examination of the psalms in detail, we are irresistibly led to admit that the characteristics which strike us most forcibly are not equally clear in all. In fact the difference in degree is so great that it approximates to a difference in kind.

We have, in the first place, a vast number of psalms in which no rational exegesis, that is at once candid and reverent, can find traces of Messianic prophecy: the principle may be there, but it is, so to speak, latent, wholly undeveloped. The writer is absorbed in the events of his own time, in his personal feelings; supported indeed by reliance on the divine power and goodness, but wholly irrespective of anticipations of a future change.

All these psalms ought to be interpreted without any attempt at what is called spiritual or mystic interpretation. When the central thought of each is brought out distinctly it will be found in accordance with the higher prophetic strain, but it must not be forced; much less should the frequent indications of natural passions be explained away: they belong to a period when the heart was in training for Christ, but did not as yet know the full working of His grace.

We have in the next place many psalms quoted in the New Testament in connection with Christ, and containing strong, indeed unmistakeable, indications of a recognition of fundamentally Messianic ideas; and yet most evidently full also of personal feelings, having all the characteristics of a strongly marked individuality.

Such for instance is the eighteenth psalm; such are others which express the feelings of David in his highest estate. The king is distinctly present to our minds as a living real person; and yet in this, and in the other psalms referring either to David or to Solomon in their kingly power, characteristics are blended which are wholly inapplicable to a human sovereign.

In the exegesis of such psalms it is clearly right in the first place to bring out into full light every trace of the individual; and then, perhaps in most instances as a separate subject for meditation, the features which are evidently ideal or typical. The more natural and simple the interpretation is, the better it will help us to do justice to the higher spiritual bearings.

Even more important is this principle when applied to the psalms written in distress of spirit, in consciousness of sin; such are, if not all, yet by far the greater number of psalms which were composed subsequently to David's great fall. In these psalms there are indeed numerous, and remarkably affecting passages, scarcely explicable save on the principle that the Spirit of Jesus gave depth and power to the innermost movements of the Psalmist's consciousness. We feel the Presence of the Atoner, the sympathizer, of Him who bears and makes His own the very agony of His sinful creatures. Still on the other hand the movements are undoubtedly David's own: the innumerable sins which he deplores are his own sins; the shame, the bitterness, the unspeakable anguish are altogether his own; at once the due and inevitable punishment, and the only remedy, for his guilt.

In the interpretation of all these psalms we hold fast to the literal interpretation; not but that when we gaze on the Man of sorrows, bearing our sins, we recall the strains by which under His controlling influence David had given full expression to the storms of agony which passed over his soul. Nor can we doubt that the Hebrews were guided by a sure instinct, when they held that, even in this period of his life, David bore sufferings which were typical of those of the Messiah. This impression is confirmed when in most of those psalms we find the expression of intensest suffering combined with unshaken and unalterable confidence in the love of God.

There are psalms however which go much further, in which a near approximation is made to the portraiture of One perfectly innocent, yet bearing chastisement due only to sin, and in some mysterious way incurring it as a merited penalty; and on the other hand having traits of majesty and spiritual dignity not less mysterious. These psalms would be recognized without hesitation as Messianic, were it not for the equally strong traces of personal feelings elicited, and sufficiently explained, by temporary circumstances. These are viewed differently, according as the reader accepts or rejects the general principle of typical and prophetical representations of Christ in the psalter. It would be hard to find any one who admits a supernatural element, to whom that principle is not a guiding light in the interpretation, though it ought not to supersede a careful and unbiassed inquiry into the literal meaning, and the circumstances under which each psalm may have been composed.

But we cannot rest within these limits. The writers of this commentary retain the position occupied formerly by all Christian expositors, and, as we have seen, by the ablest and most trustworthy exponents of Hebrew tradition, and

maintain the direct and exclusive reference to Christ in certain psalms.

We may here briefly consider three psalms, for the Messianic character of which we have authoritative declarations in the New Testament, in which also there is the strongest internal evidence; viz., the twenty-second, the forty-fifth, and the hundred-and-tenth. The reader, who is satisfied with regard to these, will find himself in a position to discern similar characteristics in other contested psalms.

One point stands out clearly; if we take these three psalms as Messianic, we have a vivid illustration of the principles previously laid down. We have Christ set before us in the two opposite, and, but for the light of revelation, irreconcileable, aspects, the one of deepest humiliation, the other of divine glory; we have also the convergence of the two currents, one bringing God ever nearer to man, the other raising man in the person of his Representative and Head to the right hand of God.

The Messianic character of the twenty-second psalm is vindicated by a remarkable variety of evidences, which are separately strong, and in their combination overwhelming.

We have in the first place positive evidence: the use of the first words by our Lord in His last agony. This may of course be explained away either as a simple reminiscence, or at the most a recognition of the typical character of the Psalmist's sufferings: but, considering the solemnity of the occasion, we most naturally regard this, like other words and acts connected with the crucifixion, as a seal and attestation to prophecy. This is confirmed by the direct and unqualified testimony of the apostle St John, and by direct quotations and many clear references in the other evangelical accounts of the crucifixion; see notes on *vv.* 1, 7, 8, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22.

We have in the second place a correspondence with all the details of the sufferings of Christ so minute and exact as to make it certain that, if those details are truly narrated by the evangelists, they were the fulfilment of prophecy. We are arguing of course at present on the assumption of the trustworthiness of the narrators; but we may point out that the correspondence is recognized by critics who see in it a note of conscious adaptation.

All this might be admitted, and yet it might be maintained that, as in other psalms, the primary subject was the living Psalmist; and here we recognize a trait common to all prophecy.—The imagery throughout has a local character. As is shewn in the commentary, the position, enemies, and sufferings of the person are described in language suggested by external circumstances, a point of great importance in its bearing upon the question of authorship. But at the same time it is certain that the traits in their combination are wholly inapplicable to David. There is not only a total absence of consciousness of sin, which might be partly accounted for, supposing them to be a product of his early manhood; but, as is shewn in the commentary, from first to last the feelings and events are true of the Man of sorrows, and, to a great extent, of Him alone.

The general truth of this exegesis may perhaps be confirmed by subjecting it to a practical test.

Read the psalm with the character and position of David before the mind's eye; and see whether it is possible to keep to the literal interpretation. Was David at any time before his fall an object of general scorn, or even after his fall without a helper? was he ever brought to the dust of death? were his hands and feet ever pierced[1]? his bones denuded? his garments taken from him and allotted to his executioners? Was he in the power of his enemies?

Read it with Christ present to your mind, and all difficulty disappears.

The forty-fifth psalm has the same kind of evidence.

First, the direct attestation of Scripture in the epistle to the Hebrews, ch. i. 8, 9: allusions in the book of Revelation, i. 16 and vi. 2: and a general correspondence with the mystical or spiritual representation of our Lord's union with His Church, and His triumph over all enemies, in the New Testament: the figures of the Bridegroom and the Bride; the weapons sharp and irresistible, yet identified with the attributes of truth,

[1] See critical note at the end of Ps. xxii.

meekness and righteousness; and the sceptre of universal dominion founded on righteousness.

Secondly, the futility of attempts to identify the person of this royal bridegroom with any historical personage in the Old Testament. The King in this psalm is fairer than the children of men, His throne is for ever and ever, He is addressed directly as God, and He is the object of worship to the Bride.

We have Christ triumphant, the Son of Man in his exaltation, identified by the Psalmist with God.

This psalm is the witness of the Hebrew Church in the interval between David and the decline of the kingdom.

As the crowning declaration comes the 110th psalm[1]. Our Lord's authority decides two points, that the psalm was written by David, and that David is not the person addressed; Matt. xxii. 43—45. The application to Christ is made by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews; see ch. i. 13, v. 6, vi. 20, and vii. throughout.

It sets Christ before us distinctly, combining, as no sovereign of Judah ever dreamt of combining, the priesthood with royalty; ruling out of Zion, as the beginning of His dominion, and mystically its permanent centre; ruling in the midst of enemies, yet having the willing obedience of His people, and seated as Adonai on the right hand of Jehovah. In the last verses we accept the old interpretation which reads in them an intimation of the severe trials which preceded and made the way for His final exaltation.

[1] See the introductory note to this psalm.

Such, in broad outline, appears to be the Christology of the Psalter; bearing throughout a reference to the ultimate purpose of God, for which both the sufferings and preservation of His faithful servants were preparatory; in a considerable portion bringing into light the characteristics of the Saviour both in His humiliation and triumph, and at least in three psalms, probably in others of similar import, setting forth all the graces of His human nature in combination with the attributes of God.

The Psalter emptied of Christ would still be a collection of lyric poems of admirable beauty, breathing a pure and lofty devotion, representing in vivid colours the events and persons of the most remarkable people in the world's history. It would retain its position among the noblest and most interesting products of human genius. But to the Christian, as such, it would have no voice, no meaning; losing its highest and most distinctive characteristic it would forfeit its claims upon his reverence and love. May this work give some help to those who would fain be satisfied as to the critical and exegetical evidence which, in the minds of the writers, supports fully the old and imperishable convictions of the Christian Church.

APPENDIX.

On the Metrical System of the Psalms.

THE general inquiry into the metrical system of Hebrew poetry belongs properly to the Introduction to the Old Testament[2], but inasmuch as that poetry attained its highest development in the Book of Psalms, some leading points may properly be taken here into consideration. This is the more necessary since the metrical structure of the psalms has important bearings upon the exegesis, and especially upon questions touching their date and origin; and although it cannot be regarded as definitely settled in many cases, yet enough can be ascertained to suggest valuable results. This indeed can be effected to a far greater extent than in translations from languages, in which the metres depend wholly upon the quantity and number of syllables, and the strophes are absolutely regular or

[2] The question is dealt with by Bleek, Keil, § 108, De Wette, &c.

exactly corresponding to each other; as in the Epinician Odes of Pindar and the chorus of the Greek dramatists.

In fact, the first peculiarity which strikes the attentive reader of the psalms, as contrasted with the lyrical productions of other nations, is the subordination of the outer form to the inner sense. In the separate verses, and in the strophes, there are indications of law influencing the form; but that law, at once vigorous and flexible, adapts itself readily to the movements of the spirit. In no ancient or modern language do we find the same combination of law and liberty. We may regard this, with some critics, as a stage in the development of form, or with others, more justly, as a result of the deeper consciousness of the special and loftiest aim of poetry, bringing the spirit into contact with the divine: but it certainly constitutes the most important and the most distinctly marked characteristic of Hebrew psalmody.

We have to consider, first the structure of the separate verses, and secondly, the structure of the groups of verses, for which the name strophe, though but partially applicable, is now generally adopted.

One point may be regarded as settled. Ancient Hebrew poetry has no metres regulated by the numbers or quantity of syllables, though even in this respect an approximation to regularity is discernible, as a natural result of other principles[1].

It has however a very complete metrical system regulated by the grouping of thoughts. This applies both to the structure of verses, and of the so-called strophes.

The law of parallelism was first distinctly brought out by Lowth, 'De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum,' whose work is recognized by foreign critics as the most important as well as the earliest on the subject. Lowth, however, confined his researches to the examination of the members of sentences. Köster first extended the law to the construction of strophes.

The simplest and the commonest form of the rhythmical structure of separate verses is the distich; each verse consisting of two equally balanced clauses.

(a) These clauses sometimes express the same thought under different forms; generally however with some slight extension or modification of meaning:

> His delight is in the law of the Lord,
> And in His law will he exercise himself day and night.

[1] Rhyme first, and then metre, were introduced into Hebrew poetry in the seventh century after our æra; see Delitzsch in Herzog's 'Real-Encyclopädie,' s. v. *Psalmen*, p. 281. Rhyme is found occasionally, yet evidently without a system, in psalms expressing mental emotion, *e.g.* cvi. 4—7; cf. Jer. iii. 21—25.

(b) Or the second clause is antithetical:

> The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,
> But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

(c) Or the second carries on the thought, draws out its consequences or results:

> Good and upright is the Lord:
> Therefore will He teach sinners in the way.

This is, in fact, the earliest known form of metre. It exists in extremely ancient specimens of Egyptian poetry[2], and occurs frequently in the Pentateuch and in poems which belong to the age between Moses and David.

The length of the clauses in these distichs varies, but upon an average a verse of two clauses contains from six to eight words: in the song of Moses, Deut. xxxii, the structure is very regular, most verses consisting of two clauses, each with three words; a rhythm which cannot be well represented in English, though it makes itself felt.

> Hear | O heavens | and I will speak,
> (*haazinu hasshamayim vaadabberah*)
> and hear, | O earth, | the words of my mouth.

Had this uniformity been maintained the result would have been a near approximation to the metrical system of the Aryan races, either iambic or trochaic as in Sanscrit, or dactylic as in Greek. But the Hebrew poet, while fully conscious of the charm of rhythmical cadence, preferred liberty to uniformity, and departed from the general rule in various directions.

1. In the verses of two clauses, which are the basis of the system, the composer sometimes uses only four words, two in each clause, as

> hear kings, hear princes;

but more frequently he increases the number to seven or even eight; still the divisions are always clearly recognized; and in Hebrew they are marked by a distinctive accent, *athnach*, *i.e.* rest, or pause.

2. Instead of couplets, verses of one clause only are frequently introduced, with consi-

[2] This fact has been pointed out by Lefébvre, 'Traduction comparée des Hymnes au Soleil,' p. 15, 1868; and by Brugsch, 'Grammaire hiéroglyphique,' p. 94, 1872; where in a single quotation four instances of synthetic and one of antithetic parallelism are given, singularly resembling Hebrew poetry: "For God prefers purity to millions of riches, and to hundreds of thousands of gold; He feeds on the truth which satisfies Him, His heart is above all sin," or "watches over sin," *i.e.* His face is against them that do evil. The hymn to the Nile translated by M. Maspero has a special value; it dates from the Ramessian epoch, and is remarkably complete (Sallier 2, p. 11, 6—14, 9); each clause is marked by a red point in the papyrus, and each strophe has the first word in red letter.

derable effect; they are used either at the beginning (xviii, xxxii, lxvi), more rarely at the end, and sometimes in the middle between two strophes, marking very impressively the tone of thought.

3. Most common is the elongation of either or of both divisions of a verse, so that the whole may consist of three, four, five, and at the utmost six clauses. Still even then the general law of division into two portions is recognized; in no case is the Hebrew accent which marks such division repeated, but the subordinate clauses are marked by another accent[1].

As a general rule, the tristich has in one division two clauses balancing one clause in the other.

Exceptions: the three clauses are sometimes parallel, and of equal length; yet even here there is for the most part a closer connection between *two*, marked by the accent:

Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it;
Yea let him tread down my life on the earth, (*athnach*)
And lay my honour in the dust.

Tetrastichs are common, but generally consist of two closely connected distichs (either synonymous, or antithetic, or synthetic); sometimes of a tristich and monostich. The pentastich consists generally of two distichs and a monostich—*e.g.* xxxix. 12.

It may be questioned whether the modern system of printing each clause as a distinct line is necessary, or advantageous; it separates clauses which are closely connected; and the ear readily detects the rhythm: a system of accents, taken as marks of intonation, might be preferable.

It is not necessary to dwell at any length upon this part of the subject: the laws of parallelism have been long recognized, nor has any considerable light been thrown upon them by late investigations.

We touch, however, upon a question far more difficult, and as yet but partially settled, when we inquire, first, whether Hebrew poetry has strophes in the proper sense of the word; and, secondly, assuming them to exist, under what forms or rules they may be classified[2].

The process first adopted and worked out with great skill by Köster rests on clear and satisfactory principles.

It is evident that in every poem there are certain points of rest or transition distinctly marked; there are often absolute breaks about which no question can be raised. In Hebrew they are generally marked, either by a change of persons, or by ejaculations, or by certain forms of expression which introduce or close a subject.

These principal divisions are, moreover, commonly subdivided into subordinate paragraphs, in which the pauses and transitions are more or less clearly indicated by the construction or by turns of thought.

As a matter of experience it is found in a very large proportion of the psalms, that, if the reader marks off, first, the principal divisions, then the subordinate paragraphs, the result is a striking and unmistakeable uniformity. Each psalm falls naturally into groups equally balanced, each group consisting of similar subdivisions. It is, however, evident that the result may be seriously affected by prejudice either adverse or favourable to the system. The divisions should therefore be determined in the first place exclusively by reference to the sense.

In some psalms the divisions are absolutely determined by the recurrence of ejaculatory refrains.

In many the word 'Selah' affords valuable help, though it cannot always be depended upon[3].

[1] Generally *ole vejored*, or *rebia*, which indicate a semi-pause, or pausal intonation. Thus,

The kings of the earth set themselves, (*rebia*)
And the rulers take counsel together; (*athnach*)
Against the Lord and against His anointed.

Both accents are sometimes used, as in this verse:

"And he shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water, (*ole vejored*, secondary accent)
That bringeth forth his fruit in his season; (*rebia*)
And his leaf shall not wither; (*athnach*)
And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

[2] It may, perhaps, be attributed to the influence of a new study that I am disposed to attach weight to the fact that Egyptian papyri, containing compositions earlier in date than any in the Book of Psalms, some earlier than the Pentateuch, recognize the regular division of poems into strophes. Each strophe in the Hymn to the Nile has the first word written with red ink (see note 1, p. 33); thus too the Hymn to Amon Ra in a papyrus of Bulaq, and the litanies to the sun in the 15th chapter of the Egyptian Ritual. It is not necessary to assume that the Hebrew poets consciously followed the Egyptian models, though far from improbable in the case of Moses; it suffices to prove that the division comes naturally; we may attribute its elaboration to the systematic character of the Hebrew mind.

[3] It is noticeable that the word Selah does not occur in the last two books of psalms, excepting in the 140th and 143rd psalms, both of which are ascribed to David. It may be inferred that it was not used as a musical note, perhaps it was not understood, at a late period; probably disappearing with the cessation of the temple-services during the captivity: it occurs for the last time in Habakkuk.

The meaning "pause" is most natural, but the etymology is wholly uncertain. It may be remarked that the Egyptian used the word *kerh*

In twenty-eight psalms Selah marks either all the divisions, or the most important divisions.

Thus Ps. iii. is divided into four strophes, of which the first, second and fourth close with Selah; the third is distinctly marked by the following ejaculation, "Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God" (iii, vii, ix, xxi, xxiv, xxxii, xxxix, &c.).

In some the Selah appears to have been accidentally misplaced, unless indeed, as is more probable, it served to call special attention to some important thought, not closing a paragraph, as iv. 4, lv. 19.

Although it may not always determine a division, yet it strongly confirms it when otherwise suggested.

A considerable number of the psalms fall at once into equal groups, which are now commonly designated strophes. They correspond to stanzas, or verses, in our metrical psalms.

We may pass by those psalms in which each line forms a complete verse, a system which scarcely justifies the use of the name strophe: they occur frequently in the later psalms, and belong to the period when the old metrical system appears to have become practically obsolete, *e.g.* xciii, cxxx, cxxxiii, cxxxiv.

We have, however, at least nine psalms in which the strophes consist each of two verses. This is the form most easily distinguished, and its existence is not questioned by critics. So iii, iv, xii, xxiv, xxxii.

Not less common are strophes each of three verses, of which the first psalm is an obvious specimen; it consists of two such strophes, of which the division is distinctly marked by change of subject.

When the strophes contain more than three verses, they are in fact only combinations of smaller strophes; thus Ps. lx. consists of three strophes each of four verses, or double distichs.

But these equal strophes are sometimes interrupted by verses which stand apart from the general system. This is most distinctly seen where the intercalated verse forms a refrain, as in Ps. xlvi, where the first strophe is marked by Selah, but the second and third have the refrain "the Lord of Hosts is with us." In such cases the separation from the general system fixes attention upon a great thought.

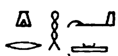
The most common use, however, of such verses is to mark the prelude, or close, or both prelude and close, of a psalm. Instances of these are pointed out in the brief notices of the structure, which the reader will find at the end of introductory remarks on the psalms. These may be taken as examples,

(1) at the beginning, x, xi, xiii, lii, c.
(2) at the close, vii, xiv, xv.
(3) at beginning and close, iv, xv, xxxix.

So far there is a general agreement among critics. But a vast number of psalms remain which do not come under this classification; in which the groups of verses determined by the logical coherence are of unequal length. Köster first shewed that in most of these psalms there are clear indications of a law, too obvious not to have been observed with full consciousness on the part of the Psalmist. His application indeed of the law is often questioned, and different divisions are proposed by other commentators: but although the uncertainty, which still attaches to his, and indeed to any other, arrangement in very many psalms, may justify us for the present in presenting the traditional form untouched—thus leaving the decision to the unfettered judgment of the reader—the principle may be regarded as settled; and critics agree generally to the classification which Köster has proposed for psalms consisting of unequal strophes[1].

1. We have psalms in which strophes of unequal length are arranged symmetrically, in parallel groups. These groups succeed each other (*e.g.* in this order, 2, 2, 3, 3); or they alternate with each other regularly (as 2, 3, 2, 3); or they occur in reverse order, presenting an antistrophic arrangement, differing from the Greek lyrical poems in the great variety and liberty of forms, yet corresponding to them in grace and harmonious interdependence. See Pss. vi, xlv, xlvii, xlviii.

Some of the most interesting and artistic combinations occur in the Korahite psalms, especially in those attributed to Asaph; they belong apparently to the period in which the art of psalmody attained its full development. The arrangement of the groups may have been determined to some extent by the position or movements of the Levitical choirs and of their leaders; in many cases the words spoken either by the high-priest or the chief musician are marked very distinctly, in others, the antiphonal responses are unmistakeable; and it is possible that a long and careful observation, corrected by sharp criticism, will bring out

(or *kelh*) , often the  alone for the group, to denote a pause, the close of a paragraph, or the transition to a different subject. The meaning of this word is "pause," "rest," or "termination." See Brugsch, 'Dict. Hier.' p. 1518; and 'Gram.' p. 96. In Pap. Sall. 1, 4—5, 5—4, &c., it introduces a different subject. This may possibly be the origin of the Hebrew word: the transcription of the second and third letters is exact, and [illegible], *k* or *g*, is sometimes softened into *s*; the guttural into the sibilant. This is a law in Aryan; see Bopp, §58: "The *s* in Zend is substituted both for the soft and hard *g* of Sanscrit, for the gutturals readily degenerate into sibilants."

[1] See Keil, 'Einleitung,' § 108, 2, 15.

these characteristics into fuller light. It must, however, be observed that in psalms attributed to David, and in some which are recognized as belonging to his earliest life, the preceding forms are found, evidently elaborated with full consciousness of their character. See remarks on Ps. xxxv.

2. There are, however, other psalms in which the indications of systematic arrangement are unmistakeable; but in which the strophes are neither equal, nor symmetrically responding to each other. They increase or decrease in length as the psalm proceeds. The increase or decrease in every case is determined by an inner law, traces of which are easily recognized: either by the abundance of subject-matter, or by the overflowing feeling of the Psalmist, as in Ps. xviii; see also xliv. The recognition of this arrangement is of considerable importance: it affects some of the psalms which are most perfect in tone of thought, in sublimity and beauty of imagery, and in artistic construction.

3. Lastly, there are undoubtedly psalms, like the dithyrambic poems of Greece, in which the outer form is wholly irregular; the division of the strophes being determined by some inner principle, or it may be by outward circumstances, of which no satisfactory account can be given. Among these psalms some few belong to the best age of Hebrew poetry: as for instance the twenty-first, which is a dithyrambic pæan. The generality, however, appear to be products of a later age; they are found, with exceedingly few exceptions, in the last part of the psalter.

The only psalms in which the thoughts of the poet occur without any progressive movement, and with little if any internal connection, are those which are called alphabetic. They are generally of a didactic character; some are, so to speak, florilegia, or collections of gnomes.

In these, each verse, sometimes each clause of a verse, begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in regular order:

(a) each clause, Pss. cxi, cxii.

(b) each verse, xxv, xxxiv, cxlv; each couplet, or strophe of two verses, xxxvii.

(c) every verse in strophes of eight verses, each strophe with its own letter in order, cxix.

Some of the alphabetic psalms have striking irregularities. Thus in Ps. ix and x, forming parts of one composition, there is a very imperfect approach to alphabetic order; some letters are omitted altogether, others occur at irregular intervals. It would seem as though David in composing this psalm was first struck by the help which such an arrangement would afford to the memory, and that afterwards he worked it out more fully, though not even then completely, in the 25th and 34th psalms.

Keil observes that the simplest form, in which each letter in the alphabet begins a verse, or couplet (distich or tetrastich), is found only in Davidic psalms.

The irregularities in these psalms have given much trouble to critics. In a few instances it is possible that they may be owing to an oversight on the part of the transcribers: see notes on Pss. xxv, xxxiv. It has also been suggested that some deviations point to a different order of the ancient alphabet (see Keil, § 108, note 18), an unnecessary assumption, not borne out by those psalms (ix, x) which bear clear marks of archaic origin. Köster however observes that "when one considers all those irregularities as a whole, it is beyond doubt that they proceed from the writers themselves, who availed themselves of the alphabetic form only as a light bond, but never followed it servilely." This has been already pointed out as characteristic of Hebrew poetry in its best age. The observation is confirmed by a comparison of those psalms, which are attributed to David, with those which in style and tone of thought have the characteristics of a later age, according to their place in the psalter. The same critic remarks with equal truth that, taken by itself, this alphabetic order is no proof of a later age.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

PSALM I.

1 *The happiness of the godly.* 4 *The unhappiness of the ungodly.*

BLESSED [a] *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the [1] ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

[a] Prov. 4. 14.
[1] Or, *wicked.*

2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; [b] and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

[b] Josh. 1. 8 Ps. 119. 1.

3 And he shall be like a tree

PSALM I.

This forms a concise introduction to the psalter, shewing the general objects and principles of the writers. It was thus regarded in very early times; thus Jerome, "some say it is, so to speak, the preface of the Holy Spirit." In some MSS. it is not presented as a distinct psalm, but simply as a preface; in others it is combined with the second. In the New Testament (Acts xiii. 33, according to some MSS.), and by many Fathers, the second psalm is quoted as the first. The date and authorship are uncertain; it has no inscription, nor is there any internal evidence which would justify us in assigning it positively to an individual; though some peculiarities of language, and the general tone of thought, point to Solomon. Some words seem to belong to a later period than David's, but the critical evidence is not conclusive; and a comparison of *v.* 3 (where see note), with Jer. xvii. 8, may almost prove that it must have been written before the prophet's time. The style is clear, simple and graceful; neither bare nor overcharged with ornament; while the images and general characteristics of manners indicate a time when justice was duly administered, and comparatively few instances seem to have occurred of triumphant iniquity. There is little against and much in favour of the supposition that it was written before the disruption of Israel, or at least before the decadence of the kingdom of Judah.

The psalm is divided into two portions, each of three verses. In the first (1—3), the character and condition of the righteous are described—the character, as consisting, first negatively, in abstinence from all kinds of evil, and then positively, in the inner principle of loving allegiance to God's law: the condition, under the image of a tree planted by rivers of water. The second portion (4—6) predicts the destruction of the wicked in the day of judgment, when the final separation will be made between them and the righteous.

1. *walketh,* &c.] Three kinds of wickedness are described; active participation in evil counsels, quiet acquiescence in sin, association with scoffers. Whether a gradation is intended seems doubtful. The last stage in the development of enmity to God may be reckless and bitter scorn (see Prov. xxi. 24, and Ewald's striking remarks in the Introduction to Prov. p. 11); but the other words are so emphatic, implying either rebellious guilt or pollution of spirit, that it seems more probable the whole race of sinners passed before the Psalmist's mind, exhibiting various developments of the same malignant principle. Abstinence from all forms of sin constitutes the negative characteristic of the godly man.

the ungodly] The Hebrew word (*rasha*) is generally rendered **wicked**, as in marg. It is a word applied only to utterly ungodly men, never to frail, or even sinful believers: cf. Job xxi. 16, and see also note on Ps. xxxii. 5.

scornful] Prov. i. 22, iii. 34, xiii. 1. See also Jer. xv. 17. The word appears to be Solomonian: it does not occur elsewhere in the psalter.

2. *his delight*] The positive characteristic is thus set forth primarily with reference to the inner principle. The heart does not merely submit to God's law, but delights in it. That law includes all revelations of God's will, whether outward as in the Sinaitic code, or inward as written on the heart. Cf. Rom. vii. 22; Ps. xix. 8, 10, cxix. 35.

meditate] The word is used sometimes of utterance, but more generally of inward meditation; the thought of God is, as it were, the very breath of the spiritual man: hence its continuity; consciously or unconsciously the movements of the inner man are under the influence of God's will. Compare the injunction to Joshua, i. 8, and see Ps. lxiii. 6, lxxvii. 12, cxix. 97.

3. *like a tree*] Dean Stanley, who follows Ritter, suggests that the oleander, a beautiful evergreen, with bright red blossoms and dark green leaves, found now only in the valley of

[c] Jer. 17. 8. [c] planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not [†] wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

† Heb. *fade.*

4 The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* [d] like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

[d] Ps. 35. 5. Isai. 17. 13.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

PSALM II.

1 *The kingdom of Christ.* 10 *Kings are exhorted to accept it.*

WHY [a] do the heathen [‖] rage, and the people [†] imagine a vain thing?

[a] Acts 4. 25. ‖ Or, *tumultuously assemble.* † Heb. *meditate.*

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the Jordan, may be alluded to in this passage. 'S. and P.' p. 146. But the oleander, an indigenous shrub, needs no cultivation; it grows, but is not "planted" (see the next note); its leaves do not indeed wither, but they are unwholesome, or poisonous, and, as such, are unlikely to be taken to illustrate a good man's character: and, what is conclusive, it bears no edible fruit, a point which it seems strange neither Dean Stanley nor Dr Tristram ('Nat. Hist. B.' p. 417) should have noticed when they quote the words "that bringeth forth his *fruit* in his season." One evergreen, the palm-tree, carefully tended, still found in the gardens of Jerusalem, of old growing, as the dean shews (pp. 144—146), on Olivet, giving probably its name to Bethany, "the house of dates," and supplying branches for the Feast of Tabernacles (see Neh. viii. 15), and for our Lord's entrance into Jerusalem (John xii. 13), satisfies all the conditions of our text. It is conspicuous for its beauty; it indicates the presence of water; it bears precious fruit, and is a recognized emblem of the righteous man: see Ps. xcii. 12, 13, and compare Tristram, p. 384.

planted] The word is used properly of the scion of a tree severed from its parent trunk, and planted in a spot where it may be carefully tended. (Aquila has "transplanted;" but see Gesen. 'Thes.' s. v.). Cf. Jer. xvii. 5—8, where the simile is elaborately drawn out, as also the contrast with the state of the ungodly, "like the heath in the desert," *v.* 6. See also Num. xxiv. 6 (the first passage in which the simile occurs), and Job xiv. 9, xxix. 19.

rivers of water] Rather **streams of water**, water running in channels for irrigation. Cf. Rev. xxii. 2. LXX. and Symmachus have τὰς διεξόδους. The allusion to watered gardens is supposed by some to point to the north of Palestine, where trees growing by running streams are familiar objects, see Ezek. xvii. 5, 8; but the expression appears more specially applicable to royal gardens carefully irrigated and planted with choice trees; cf. Eccles. ii. 5, 6.

wither] See Ezek. xlvii. 12, a passage of great importance in its bearings upon this simile.

he doeth] This clause appears to revert from the simile to the godly man; but the word in Hebrew applies equally to the production of fruit; "whatsoever it produces;" and such is probably its meaning here, as in Jer. xvii. 8, where A.V. has "yielding" fruit.

shall prosper] Or, He shall make it prosper; as in Gen. xxxix. 23: to which there may possibly be here a reference.

4. *like the chaff*] Job xxi. 18; Ps. xxxv. 5.

5. *shall not stand*] Or, "rise up." They will be cast down, unable to stand in the presence of their Judge. Cf. Mal. iii. 2; see also Ps. v. 5, lxxvi. 7, and above all, Luke xxi. 36. The LXX. and the Vulg. render the word "rise again," alluding to the resurrection of the dead. The Hebrew word sometimes has this meaning, as in Job xiv. 12; Ps. lxxxviii. 10; Isai. xxvi. 14, 19 (see Rœdiger, Ges. 'Th.' p. 1204, § g), but it is not applicable here, since the wicked will rise for judgment; cf. John v. 29. The Targum gives what is probably the true meaning, "shall not be justified in the great day." Thus Rashi, "in the day of judgment."

in the congregation] The word is used repeatedly of the congregation of Israel in the Pentateuch. This passage is supposed by some commentators to mean simply that sinners will not be permitted to remain partakers of the privileges of the National Church; but the preceding clause, and the whole tenour of the context, point to the day of judgment, when the righteous will be completely and finally separated from evil-doers. Köster considers that this and the second psalm are placed at the head of the psalter because they present at once the two fundamental doctrines of the Hebrew Church, the judgment of God, and His Messiah.

6. *knoweth*] God's knowledge implies approval and love of those who strive to obey Him. Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 18.

the ungodly] Or, **wicked.** The recurrence of the word, used to denote evil men in the first verse of this psalm, should be observed.

PSALM II.

The Psalmist (*vv.* 1, 2) in a far-reaching vision sees Jehovah on His throne, and Mes-

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*,

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siah entering upon His universal dominion. The enemies of both on earth rise up against them with frantic tumult, and vainly strive to cast off the fetters of their rule. Jehovah (*v.* 4), seated in the highest heaven, laughs them to scorn, and proclaims a decree of Messiah's dominion; in *v.* 7 Messiah Himself speaks, and tells of the Empire committed to Him, and of the fate which awaits all who oppose Him. In *v.* 10 the Psalmist addresses the refractory kings, and counsels wisdom, seeing the invincible might arrayed against them.

The ancient Jewish commentators describe the Messianic interpretation of this psalm as a common one. Kimchi says, "Some interpret this psalm of Gog and Magog, and the anointed is King Messiah: but it is more natural to suppose that David spake it concerning himself." Rashi makes a similar statement, but adds with singular candour: "In order to keep to the literal sense and answer the heretics (*i. e.* Christians), it is better to explain it of David himself." The Talmud, treatise 'Succah,' has a passage in which these words occur; "It is a tradition of the Rabbis that in *v.* 8 Messiah, the Son of David, said to him, 'Ask of me anything, and I will give it thee,' &c." Aben Ezra allows the application of the psalm to Messiah to be the best: "If the words of it," he says, "be applied to Messiah, the matter is clearer." The Jew in Justin Martyr ('Dial. with Trypho,' pp. 333, 401, edit. Thirl.) also refers the psalm to Messiah, but doubts its applicability to the suffering Messiah. Modern Jewish commentators deny the former application, and interpret the psalm of David exclusively. In the New Testament the psalm is referred to repeatedly as Messianic: in Acts iv. 25, the commencing verses are quoted as referring to the rising up against Christ of Pontius Pilate and the Jews: in Acts xiii. 33, *v.* 7 is referred to as accomplished in the resurrection; and again, in Hebrews i. 5, as intimating Christ's proper divinity. In Matt. xxvi. 63, the High Priest, in allusion to the same verse of the psalm, asks our Lord if He be Christ the Son of God; and Nathanael, John i. 49, apparently with the same reference, addresses Him with the words, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel." See also John vi. 69. So that no doubt can remain that in early days, before the Christian era, the psalm was regarded as Messianic.

Any attempt to explain it in reference to David, Solomon, Zerubbabel, or the Maccabees, is unsatisfactory. The words of the psalm are too great, its tone is too lofty, for any such application. The reply of Messiah, verse 7, when He takes up the word of Jehovah, could not be uttered by any man without an impious impropriety. The circumstances portrayed do not suit any known circumstances of the lives of any of the above-named princes. Messiah (*v.* 8) is Lord of the whole earth; His enemies (*v.* 3) are rebels: He is the Son of God (*v.* 7), in a peculiar mysterious sense; those who trust in Him (*v.* 12) are blessed (cf. Ps. cxlvi. 3, 5), and His anger (*v.* 12) is fatal, as that of God.

The words of the early Christians (Acts iv. 25) ascribe the psalm to David. Its place in the collection, its similarity to Ps. cx., its vigour, sublimity and insight, fall in with this teaching of Scripture and tradition. It should be noticed that critics of authority attribute the psalm to Solomon (Ewald, Paul., Bleek, &c.); to Hezekiah (Maur.); to Isaiah, or his times (Delitzsch); but, as it would seem, on slight grounds. A decree, in some sort adumbrating the decree in *v.* 7, is given in 2 S. vii. 14.

The application of the psalm is generally to Christ's triumph over His enemies, and the establishment of His universal Empire. In a vision such as this of the everlasting dominion of Messiah, it need not surprise us if all the circumstances which led to it—His humiliation, death, and suffering, ascension, sending down of the Spirit, &c.—are not embraced. Notices of His humble appearance, and of its attendant circumstances, seem to have been revealed to psalmists and prophets in one form or other (Ps. xvi., etc.; Isai. liii., etc.), but would be out of place—may we say so, in this revelation of Christ triumphant.

1. *and the people*] Rather, "peoples," *i. e.* of many lands.

imagine] The marg. reads "meditate," which seems better; LXX. ἐμελέτησαν; Vulg. "meditati sunt." Aq. φθέγξεται κενῶς, recognizing the prophetic import: see Ps. i. 2, note. This word, as well as that employed before *rage*, describes not action, but purpose.

a vain thing] *i. e.* a purpose which is nought, and will come to nought. The Psalmist, whose eyes are opened to the sight of Jehovah and Messiah, and to the comprehension of Their might, knows that all attempts against Them are vain.

2. *set themselves*] *i. e.* in posture of defiance, as Goliath did against the army of God, 1 S. xvii. 16—*against the LORD, and against his anointed.* The word "Messiah," rendered here "anointed," is commonly used of the theocratic King, 1 S. ii. 10, xii. 3, 5, xvi. 6, xxiv. 6, 10; 2 S. i. 14, 16, xix. 21,

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 [b] He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and [1] vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I [†] set my king [†] upon my holy hill of Zion.

7 I will declare [1] the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, [c] Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 [d] Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

9 [e] Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

[b] Prov. i. 26.
[1] Or, *trouble.*
[†] Heb. *anointed.*
[†] Heb. *upon Zion, the hill of my holiness.*
[1] Or, *for a decree.*
[c] Acts 13. 33. Heb. 1. 5.
[d] Ps. 2. 1
[e] Rev. 2. 27. & 19. 15.

&c.: of Cyrus, Isai. xlv. 1. The context shews that it is used here in an absolute special sense.

3. *Let us*, &c.] The words of the rebellious kings; *their bands*, *i. e.* the bands of Jehovah and Messiah. This image of "bands" and "cords" comes (Hupfeld, Moll, &c.) from yoked oxen eager to cast off the yoke, Isai. x. 27; Jer. xxx. 8; Nahum i. 13: transferred to prisoners in captivity, Ps. cvii. 14, &c. The sound of the original words and the rhythm express at once, so that we almost see and hear, the precipitancy and rage of the speakers.

4. *He that sitteth*, &c.] The action is rather present; Jehovah, Who dwells unapproachable in highest heaven, laughs, Ps. xxxvii. 13; the Lord (Adonai) scoffs at their vain enterprise: but

5. *Then*] Or, "Presently," when the fit time has come, in the midst of their vainglorious boasting, and as they advance to the assault (Deut. xxix. 19, 20), He speaks and acts; speaks to them in His wrath, and confounds in His manifest displeasure. Again the rhythm of the original, and choice of terms, suggest the idea, in the first clause, of thunder (Herder, &c.), or rather of a *Word* like rolling thunder, followed in the second clause by a deadly scattering lightning.

6. *Yet have I set*, &c.] Jehovah's word: lit. "And as for Me, I have set My king upon My holy mountain" (the emphasis is upon the pronoun). Zion is put for the seat and centre of Messiah's dominion; a vision of its future glory might appear to David, who took it from the Jebusites, and placed the ark there, 2 S. v. 7, 9, vi. 12; and 1 K. viii. 1. Some (Gesen., Ew., Umb., Zunz, &c.) render the words as in the margin, "I have anointed My king upon My holy hill of Zion," as if Zion were the spot upon which the king was anointed: but the rendering of the A.V. is defended by good authorities; either rendering suits the Messianic exposition of the psalm equally well. David was anointed king, 1 S. xvi. 13; 2 S. v. 3, before he was possessed of Mount Zion: but the words in question can scarcely apply to him, even in the first instance. The LXX. and Vulg. interpret as if they were spoken by Messiah, "I have been set by Him as king upon Zion, His holy mountain."

7. *I will declare the decree*, &c.] Messiah, without preface, takes up the word of Jehovah. "I will tell," He says, "of a decree, an eternal, immutable decree, by which I reign. Jehovah said unto Me, Thou art My Son; not as all the Israelites (Ex. iv. 22, 23; Deut. xiv. 1) are sons, or as any king of Israel is a son; but My only Son, the Inheritor of My sovereign dominion." Compare Heb. i. 5. "This day have I, even I, begotten Thee; This day have I given to Thee, not existence, which is presupposed, but a new existence, a new career, a throne of the world, and of all that is, or will be, in it." What day? The day when the promised dominion over the world began, Acts xiii. 33; Rom. i. 4; or generally, the day on which Christ commenced the work, which eventuated in His everlasting dominion. The word translated in this and other passages "to beget" is in Hebrew used of either parent. It more strictly belongs to the mother, and denotes not the act of conception, but that of bringing forth. It is thence somewhat loosely transferred to the father, and signifies "to have a child born"—"to become the father of a living child." Applied to God, in His Parental relation, it would denote "to raise to life," or "to bring forth into life," &c. (Thrupp, Vol. I. p. 38). Kay interprets "The Day" as that day on which Christ was raised from the womb of the earth, the firstborn from the dead (Col. i. 18), and received the incommunicable prerogative of being heir of all things (Heb. i. 2). The word of Messiah extends to *v.* 9 inclusive.

9. *Thou shalt*, &c.] The rod or sceptre of authority, Ps. cx. 2, shall be of iron, to destroy and dash into pieces, like a potter's vessel, that cannot be mended, Jer. xix. 11. Some commentators (De Wette, Hupf., Rosenm., &c.) say of this verse that it cannot describe the mild rule of Christ in any stage of it. But similar descriptions of the ultimate fate of rebels proceed out of the lips of Christ

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. ^f^Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

f Prov. 16. 20. Isai. 30. 18. Jer. 17. 7. Rom. 9. 33. & 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 6.

Himself, Matt. xxiv. 51; and the image of this verse is often employed in Rev. (ii. 27, xii. 5, xix. 15), to describe that fate. It must be noticed that the phrases used in the above places of the Apocalypse are from the LXX. It is easy to see how their translation arose; see Note; but there is no reason to doubt the received version.

10—12. *Be wise now*, &c.] Address of the Psalmist, who has heard the words of Jehovah and His Son. "Seeing that Jehovah and Messiah are irresistible, *be wise, ye kings*, before it is too late. *Rejoice*, as Jehovah is great and holy; *with trembling*, as He is omnipotent," Heb. xii. 28, 29. "*Kiss* (in token of homage, 1 S. x. 1; 1 K. xix. 18) *the Son, lest He* (the Son) *be angry, and ye perish in the way*, or, *journey in the way* of destruction." A stop:—

12. *Son*] The word rendered "Son" is unusual in this sense: it occurs three times in Prov. xxxi. 2. The versions, LXX., Vulg., Targum, Aq., Sym., Jer., &c. (see Note below), render as if the reading were different, or the word had a different import. The Syr. renders "Kiss the Son" as the A. V., and with it agree some Jewish commentators, as Aben Ezra and Maimonides. In more recent times, Mendelssohn, Gesenius, Fürst, De Wette, Rosenm., Umbreit, and, still more recently, Zunz, agree with the Syriac. No explanation is free from difficulties. The phrase seems emphatic and poetical. The introduction of the Son in *v.* 7 makes a recurrence to His separate dignity to be expected: and the propitiation of Jehovah in *v.* 11 leads naturally to a mention of some homage to be paid to the Son. The absence of the article in the original is emphatic. "A Son," as if none could doubt what Son and Whose Son is intended. So *v.* 7, Heb., "a decree," as if none could doubt what decree. If this translation be adopted, it is unnatural to introduce, in *vv.* 11, 12, any subject except the Son: it is He that may be angry; it is His wrath that is sometimes kindled; they are blessed that take refuge in Him.

when his wrath is kindled, &c.] Lit. "For His wrath may suddenly, or, for an instant, kindle. (Then) blessed are they that trust, or find refuge in Him."

We may notice (as above mentioned) the correspondence between the picture presented to us in *vv.* 9, 10, &c. and Rev. vi. At the last Messiah's enemies will be destroyed: and possibly His appearance as king and judge will occasion as much surprise to some, as His first appearance in lowliness and humility occasioned to the Jews in His own day. The last verse of the psalm, Calvin remarks, relieves the severity of verses 9, 10, 11: "If His wrath be kindled, and suddenly blaze forth, then blessed are they who trust in Him, and are safe."

NOTES on Psalm II. 9, 12.

9. תְּרֹעֵם, "thou shalt break," from רעע; instead of which the LXX., perhaps with reference to Micah vii. 14, read תִּרְעֵם from רעה.

12. LXX. *δράξασθε παιδείας*; Vulg. "apprehendite disciplinam," as if בר meant "discipline;" Targum, "receive instruction." Aquila, *καταφιλήσατε ἐκλεκτῶς*; Sym., *προσκυνήσατε καθαρῶς*; Jer. "adorate pure," as if בר were adv.: but in his Comm. "adorate filium."

PSALM III.

The security of God's protection.

A Psalm of David, ^a^when he fled from Absalom his son.

a 2 Sam. 15. 15.

LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many *are* they that rise up against me.

2 Many *there be* which say of my

Psalm III.

This is the first psalm which is ascribed in the title to David, and the only one in this book which is expressly assigned to the period of his flight from Absalom. It describes in vivid colours the perils of the king, and the exultation of his enemies; but the expressions of confidence and triumph towards the end shew that it was composed shortly before his restoration.

Hitzig refers it to an earlier period, chiefly because there is no allusion to an unnatural son; Ewald disposes of the objection on the

soul, *There is* no help for him in God. Selah.

3 But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield [1]for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

[1] Or, *about.*

4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

5 [a]I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

[a] Ps. 4. 8.

6 [b]I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.

[b] Ps. 27. 3.

7 Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 [c]Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: thy blessing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

[c] Isai. 43. 11. Hos. 13. 4.

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ground stated in the introduction to the following psalm. The internal evidence of Davidic authorship is recognized by both critics.

The structure is regular, four divisions, each with two verses of equal length (with one exception, *v.* 7): three are distinctly marked by Selah, the other not less clearly by the following ejaculation, *v.* 7. From the 5th verse, and from the general tenour of the psalm, it is inferred that it was composed for a morning song: thus Ps. iv. is an evening song; in both the number of verses is the same. The Hebrew word for psalm in the inscription, and the frequent use of the musical term Selah, may imply that it was used in the liturgical service of the temple.

1. *are they increased*] Thus 2 S. xv. 12, "The conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom." Thus too 2 S. xvi. 15, "Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel."

rise up against me] Cf. Ps. xviii. 39.

2. *of my soul*] The word soul is used commonly in place of the personal pronoun; but it has a special emphasis in this and similar passages. David clave to the Lord with his soul; his soul is the object against which attacks are aimed, and which feels the bitterness of the reproach, knowing that his own sin had given occasion to the calamity. Cf. Ps. lxxi. 10.

help] *Salvation* better expresses the Hebrew, which includes deliverance from all evils, spiritual or temporal. LXX. σωτηρία, Jerome, "salus." It may be remarked that David uses both names, God (Elohim), and Jehovah (see *v.* 8), in reference to salvation, but the first name is put into the mouth of his enemies, the second is taken as the expression of his own innermost feelings. The names are too frequently interchanged to justify any general assertion; but this and similar passages indicate that a nearer, more directly personal, or covenanted, relation is involved in the name Jehovah.

Selah] A word of doubtful origin; it is generally agreed that it is a musical term, probably for a sweep of harp-strings, marking a pause. See appendix to Introd.

3. *a shield for me*] Or, **a shield about me**, as in the margin. Cf. Gen. xv. 1, a passage to which frequent reference is found in the psalms: see also Job i. 10. Ewald remarks the appropriateness of this metaphor in the mouth of David. "The hero accustomed to battle and victory lives and breathes in warlike thoughts and associations." Cf. *v.* 6.

4. *I cried*, &c.] The Hebrew has "My voice unto Jehovah I cry;" an expression which is understood to mean, "I cry out incessantly in my trouble." Thus Hupf., Hitz., &c. Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 1, cxlii. 1.

out of his holy hill] Although David is in exile, far from Jerusalem, and therefore, as his enemies might boast, unable to approach the holy hill of Zion (cf. Ps. ii. 6), he knows that God hears and answers his prayer. The expression may not prove, but it supports, the traditional origin of the psalm.

5. *I laid me down*] The word "I" is emphasized in the Hebrew. I for my part, as though contrasting his feelings of trust and peace with those of others less confident of salvation in God.

sustained] **Sustaineth**: the change of tense marks the sense of an abiding support.

6. *ten thousands*] Or, "myriads." David was surrounded on all sides by revolted subjects.

set themselves] Or, "arrayed themselves:" a military term, as in Isai. xxii. 7. This passage is conclusive against the supposition that the psalm was composed by a mere private individual.

7. *Arise*] See Num. x. 35: "Arise, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered;" a passage to which there are numerous references in the Davidic psalms; *e.g.* vii. 6, ix. 19, x. 12, xvii. 13, lxviii. 1.

thou hast smitten] At once a grateful remembrance of past mercies, and a confident anticipation of immediate deliverance.

cheek bone] The jaw. David's enemies are compared to wild beasts; doubtless with reference to his own early experience. See note on Ps. xxiii. 1, and 1 S. xvii. 34—36. The sternness of the expression befits the restorer of order; thus Ewald.

8. *thy blessing is*] The Hebrew has "Thy blessing upon thy people:" an exclamation

PSALM IV.

1 David prayeth for audience. 2 He reproveth and exhorteth his enemies. 6 Man's happiness is in God's favour.

To the [1]chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David.

[1] Or, *overseer.*

HEAR me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress; [1]have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

[1] Or, *be gracious unto me.*

2 O ye sons of men, how long *will ye turn* my glory into shame? *how long* will ye love vanity, *and* seek after leasing? Selah.

3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

5 Offer [a]the sacrifices of righte-

[a] Ps. 50. 14 & 51. 19.

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which has the force of a prayer. The kingly heart of David cannot separate his personal deliverance from that of his people. His love is not quenched by their revolt: though misled, they are to him still God's people: compare the close of Ps. xxviii.

PSALM IV.

This is an evening psalm (see *v.* 8), and its close connection with the preceding makes it probable that it was composed at the same period, it may be on the evening of the same day. Some expressions in the psalm may seem to point rather to the period of the persecution of David by Saul (*vv.* 4, 7); but they are quite compatible with that of his flight from Absalom. There is little force in the objection that there is no allusion to his rebellious son. David loved Absalom dearly, and doubtless regarded him as an instrument in the hands of Ahithophel. In accordance with the tone of the last verse in Ps. iii., there are in this no imprecations or even prayers against his foes, but exhortations to his followers, such as they specially needed at that time of trial.

Köster observes the close resemblance between this and the preceding psalm in structure, form of thought, and language: both, as he says, *undoubtedly* of David.

The psalm may be divided into four parts: a prayer, *v.* 1; a reproof to his enemies, 2, 3; exhortation to his friends, 4, 5; a contrast between their despondency and the gladness, peace, and security of God's faithful servant, 6—8.

Neginoth] The word denotes an accompaniment of stringed instruments: see note on 2 S. vi. 5.

1. *O God of my righteousness*] *i.e.* from whom my righteousness comes, who makes me upright, and who will justify me. Cf. Isai. liv. 17; Jer. xxiii. 6. David refers to his condition at the time, as though he would say, God who gave me righteousness will prove that I am righteous by delivering me: thus in *v.* 3 he is sure of an answer to prayer on the grounds of God's election and his own piety.

thou hast enlarged me] Or, "hast made room for me," as in Gen. xxvi. 22; see also note on Ps. xviii. 36. A common salutation in Arabic is "space (the same word) and ease to thee." In former deliverances from great straits, David here, as in the preceding psalm, recognizes a pledge of present help.

2. *sons of men*] The Hebrew idiom is equivalent to "sirs," and implies that the persons so addressed had certain claims to distinction; there may be a touch of irony, men of birth and station, but men after all, men of the world in mind and feeling. As Dr Kay observes, the admonition was needed hardly less by Joab, Abishai, and others of David's own party, than by Absalom's followers. Cf. 2 S. xix. 5—7.

my glory into shame] This may apply to either period to which the psalm is assigned, but has a peculiar fitness in the mouth of the dishonoured king. The construction, however, is elliptical, and a different reading was followed by the LXX., How long will ye be heavy, *i.e.* stubborn in heart? See Note below.

leasing] Or, "falsehood;" the characteristic of the conspirators; see 2 S. xv. 1—9.

3. *hath set apart*] The rendering is literal, but the original implies peculiar and marvellous favour shewn in the election of the godly man. Critics generally follow the LXX., rendering the clause "He hath done marvellously to His godly one," but Hupfeld shews the correctness of the construction adopted in the A. V. The term "godly" is, so to speak, the technical designation of the pious, equivalent to "saints" in the New Testament.

4. *Stand in awe*] Or, "tremble." This appears to be the meaning of the word; but the translation of the LXX. and Vulg. (ὀργίζεσθε, "irascimini," thus too Aq. and Symm.), "be ye angry," is defended by Dr Kay, and appears to be accepted by St Paul, Eph. iv. 26. In either case it may be taken as an exhortation to the followers of David, who needed greatly the warning against presumption and fierceness.

commune] See Ps. lxxvii. 6. Note the antithesis, "speak in your heart, but be silent."

ousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

6 *There be* many that say, Who will shew us *any* good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

8 [b] I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

[b] Ps. 3. 5.

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upon your bed] This is the first indication of the hour, at eventide.

5. *sacrifices of righteousness*] Possibly alluding to the sacrifices offered in unrighteousness, as by Absalom, 2 S. xv. 7—9; but the expression appears rather to apply to religious services in general; see Ps. l. 14, li. 19; Deut. xxxiii. 19. David's followers could not offer the legal sacrifices in exile.

6. *many that say*] The statement may be taken generally, but it applies specially to the discouraged and desponding adherents of David.

lift thou up] Compare the blessing to be pronounced by Aaron and his sons, Num. vi. 24—26; see also Ps. xxxi. 16, and the refrain of Ps. lxxx., 3, 7, 19.

7. *their corn and their wine*] Note the clear reference in this and the next verse to Deut. xxxiii. 28. David's enemies have the material, he has the spiritual, privileges of God's people; thus, again, in the next verse, the Psalmist adopts the words of Deut. xxxiii. 12, "the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him." The mention of corn and wine may possibly indicate the season of David's flight, which was in early autumn; see 2 S. xvi. 1, and xvii. 19.

8. *I will both*] Lit. "together," *i.e.* as soon as I lie down, sweet sleep will refresh me. Cf. Job xi. 18, 19.

only] The same expression as Deut. xxxii. 12, "the LORD alone did lead him." With the last words compare Deut. xxxiii. 28, "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone;" see also Lev. xxv. 18, 19; Deut. xii. 10. The Syriac connects the word "alone" with David.

NOTE on PSALM IV. 2.

The LXX. ἕως πότε βαρυκάρδιοι; ἱνατί κ.τ.λ. עד־מה כבדי לב למה. This requires the suppression of ו, very common in the MSS., and the change of one letter, לב for לכ. The reading clears the construction of both clauses. "How long will ye be hard of heart? Why will ye love vanity?" The Syr. had a different reading for לכלמה; "will ye hide?"

PSALM V.

1 *David prayeth, and professeth his study in prayer.* 4 *God favoureth not the wicked.* 7 *David, professing his faith, prayeth unto God to guide him,* 10 *to destroy his enemies,* 11 *and to preserve the godly.*

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.

GIVE ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

3 [a] My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morn-

[a] Ps. 130. 6.

PSALM V.

This psalm must have been composed at Jerusalem, since David had access to the house of God; see *v.* 7; probably a short time before the open revolt of Absalom, when the king was aware of the machinations of conspirators under a bloodthirsty and treacherous chief, *v.* 6. Like Ps. iii. it is a morning song, *v.* 3. The style is thoroughly Davidic, concise, vigorous, with rapid transitions of thought and feeling. The only word which has been relied upon as indicating a later date is "temple," *v.* 7, which, however, in the Hebrew is applied to the tabernacle; see note on *v.* 7. The psalm is divided into four parts, each consisting of six lines, or three complete metres. i. The morning prayer (1—3). ii. and iii. The grounds for hope; first, that God abhors wickedness (4—6), and secondly, that David seeks God and trusts in His guidance (7, 8). iv. The guilt of David's enemies, with prayer for their overthrow, 9—

upon Nehiloth] Rather, "to Nehiloth:" a word which probably means an accompaniment of flutes.

1. *meditation*] The word occurs but twice, here and Ps. xxxix. 3. It signifies gentle, half-inward utterance, a thought inwardly

ing will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.

4 For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

5 The foolish shall not stand † in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

† Heb. *before thine eyes.*

6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor † the bloody and deceitful man.

† Heb. *the man of bloods and deceit.*

7 But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: *and* in thy fear will I worship toward † thy holy temple.

† Heb. *the temple of thy holiness.*

8 Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of † mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

† Heb. *those which observe me.*

9 For *there is* no ‖ faithfulness † in their mouth; their inward part *is* † very wickedness; [b] their throat *is* an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

‖ Or, *stedfastness.*
† Heb. *in his mouth,* that is, *in the mouth of any of them.*
† Heb. *wickednesses.*
[b] Rom. 3. 13.

10 ‖ Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall ‖ by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

‖ Or, *Make them guilty.*
‖ Or, *from their counsels.*

11 But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever

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clothed in words, and softly uttered; Jerome has "murmur."

2. *my King*] The expression has a special suitableness in the mouth of the earthly representative of the King of kings. Cf. Ps. lxxxiv. 3. It is used specifically of God as the King of the Theocracy; cf. Ps. x. 16.

3. *in the morning*] The word, twice repeated, is emphatic; not merely every morning, but in the morning, as a special hour for sacred acts, for the offering of the daily sacrifice, see Job i. 5, and public prayer.

will I direct] Or, **will I set in order.** The Hebrew word is used specially of laying the wood, or the limbs of victims, on the altar. Prayer is thus represented as a spiritual sacrifice, to be offered with careful preparation. It is a function of the spiritual priesthood inherent in God's people, Ex. xix. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. i. 6. On prayer as incense, see Ps. cxli. 2.

will look up] Or, **look out**, as a watchman, or sentinel. It represents the Psalmist as watching in spirit the ascent of the prayer, an acceptable sacrifice, and expecting the answer. Cf. Mic. vii. 7, where "unto the LORD" completes the meaning.

5. *foolish*] Or, "boasters." The word includes the meaning of empty boasting. Cf. Ps. lxxiii. 3.

workers of iniquity] Men who make evil their business or trade; an expression which occurs frequently in Job and the Prophets. Cf. Ps. vi. 8, xiv. 4, &c.

6. *bloody and deceitful man*] Or, **a man of blood and guile.** The expression points to an individual, probably to Ahithophel. "Blood," lit. bloods, as elsewhere in the sense of murder. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 9, lv. 23, where it is connected, as here, with guile.

7. *thy house*] The tabernacle is called the house of the Lord in Josh. vi. 24 and 2 S. xii. 20. The word rendered "temple," in the next clause, is also applied to the tabernacle in 1 S. i. 9 (where see note), and iii. 3. At a later period it is used specially of the Priests' court in the Temple, and very frequently of the Temple itself. It means properly a Palace; in this and similar passages it denotes the abode of the great King, an expression equally applicable to the tabernacle, whether, as at Shiloh, surrounded by a wall, or, as in the time of David, standing as a tent on the Holy Mount. Cf. Ps. xi. 4, xviii. 6; in Ps. xxvii., verse 4 compared with 6 shews that tabernacle and temple were convertible terms. Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch; see also Ges. 'Thes.' p. 376.

9. *faithfulness*] Or, "trustworthiness;" firm principle on which one can rely. In Ps. li. 10, the word is applied to the spirit, "a right spirit;" in lvii. 7, to the heart, "my heart is fixed."

wickedness] The Hebrew word means a yawning abyss, hence, destruction, or, as a characteristic of an evil man, malice: beneath the fair show of duty there is a fathomless depth of malice. See note on Job vi. 30. The word (*havvoth*) occurs only in Job, Prov. and Psalms. In Arabic it is used specially of hell.

they flatter with their tongue] Or, **they make their tongue smooth.** The image appears to be taken from a serpent. Its prey slips over the smooth tongue. Cf. Prov. xxviii. 23. Or "tongue" is taken simply for words, as in Prov. ii. 16, "she maketh her words smooth;" cf. Ps. lv. 21.

10. *Destroy thou them*] Lit. **Declare them guilty.** Punishment follows of course, but is not expressed. Thus Hupfeld, and Kay, "declare their guilt," which is less forcible. LXX. κρίνον αὐτούς.

by their own counsels] As a direct result of their own machinations. The marginal rendering "from," or "out of," their own counsels, *i.e.* let their counsels be frustrated, is preferred by some commentators, and has

† Heb. *thou coverest over, or, protectest them.*

shout for joy, because † thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

12 For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou † compass him as *with* a shield.

† Heb. *crown him.*

PSALM VI.

1 *David's complaint in his sickness.* 8 *By faith he triumpheth over his enemies.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth ‖ upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, *upon the eighth.*

a Ps. 38. 1.

O [a] LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I *am* weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

3 My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

5 [b] For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

b Ps. 30. 9. & 88. 11. & 115. 17. & 118. 17. Isai. 38. 18.

6 I am weary with my groaning; ‖ all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

‖ Or, *every night.*

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the authority of the Ancient Versions, LXX., Vulg., Syr. For the fulfilment see 2 S. xvii. 23.

for they, &c.] David thus assigns the true motive and justification for imprecations directed against the open enemies of the King, Whom he represents; see note, *v.* 2.

11. *because thou defendest them*] Or, **and do thou shelter them.** The shelter may refer to a tent, or overhanging wings.

12. *compass him*] *i.e.* surround, as with the large shield which covered the whole body.

PSALM VI.

This is the first of the penitential psalms. It was composed in a season of extreme depression, probably when the Psalmist was dangerously sick, and receiving accounts which made him anticipate an open outbreak of rebellion. Such an illness is not mentioned in the historical books, but there are plain and very numerous allusions to it in the psalms, as for instance: Pss. xviii. 5, xxii. 14, xxv. 18, xxx. 2, 7—9, xxxi. 9, 10, xxxviii. 7, xli. and xlii. It harmonizes also with the transactions preceding the revolt of Absalom, whose machinations could scarcely have gone on so openly had not David been for a season unable to discharge his kingly duties; see 2 S. xv. 1—6. The sickness is undoubtedly regarded by the Psalmist as part of the chastisement due to the great crime, which brought disgrace and misery upon his latter years.

There are three divisions clearly marked; the first, 1—3, and the last, 8—10, have each three lines; the middle, 4—7, has four.

Neginoth] See above on Ps. iv.

Sheminith] See 1 Chro. xv. 21. It occurs again in the title of a penitential psalm, xii. Upon the eighth (see marg.) or "octave" probably means with a bass voice, or accompaniment.

1. *O LORD*] David uses the name Jehovah exclusively in this psalm. He has no hope but in the grace of which that name is a pledge. Rebuke, anger, chasten, displeasure—each word involves an acknowledgment of deep guilt. David feels that his sin has found him out. Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 1. Jeremiah adopts the expressions; see ch. x. 24, xxx. 11, xlvi. 28. Our blessed Lord uses them as our representative, bearing the burden and penalty of our sins, see note on *v.* 3.

2. *heal me*] Cf. Ps. xxx. 2, xli. 4; Jer. xvii. 14, and xxx. 17.

I am weak] The word implies exhaustion, a drooping as of a blighted plant.—Kay.

my bones] As in Job, this denotes a disease penetrating the whole frame, and causing excruciating anguish. Cf. Job iv. 14, xxx. 17, 30, xxxiii. 19—21.

3. *My soul*] The soul, conscious of guilt, suffers exceedingly, far more than the tortured body. "Vexed," in this and in the preceding verse, scarcely expresses the force of the Hebrew, which implies extreme terror and dismay. See Ps. xxx. 7. The LXX. use the word ἐταράχθη, adopted by our Lord, Joh. xii. 27, "now is my soul troubled."

4. *Return*] Cf. Ps. xc. 13, where both clauses are represented: "Return, O Lord, how long?" See also Ps. lxxiv. 9, 10, where "how long?" is the key-note.

5. *no remembrance*] David speaks of those who die, not being delivered and saved; see *v.* 4. For such there is no opportunity to celebrate the mercy of God, or to give Him thanks. But under the old dispensation a veil hung over the intermediate state of the departed. David knew that life was the season for serving God, and that knowledge sufficed for practical purposes until the life and immortality, dimly anticipated by the Patriarchs, were brought to light by Christ. The cessation of active service, even of remembrance or devotion, does not affect the question of a future restoration. Even the Saviour saith, "The night cometh when no man can work." On the proofs that the Psalmist looked for

7 Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

8 [c] Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

[c] Matth. 7. 23. & 25. 41. Luke 13. 27.

9 The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.

10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly.

PSALM VII.

1 *David prayeth against the malice of his enemies, professing his innocency.* 10 *By faith he seeth his defence, and the destruction of his enemies.*

Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the [1] words of Cush the Benjamite.

[1] Or, *business.*

O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

2 Lest he tear my soul like a lion,

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such restoration, see Introduction, § 18, and notes on Ps. xvi. Compare this verse with Ps. xxx. 9, and Isai. xxxviii. 18.

in the grave] In Sheol, Hades, the unseen world. See note on Job x. 21.

6. *make I my bed to swim*] The translation is literal, and expresses the true sense of the Hebrew. Compare Homer, 'Od.' XVII. 102, 3, λέξομαι εἰς εὐνὴν ἥ μοι στονόεσσα τέτυκται, αἰεὶ δάκρυσ' ἐμοῖσι πεφυρμένη.

water] Or, "drench."

7. *consumed*] **Wastes away**, as a garment fretted by moths. Ps. xxxi. 9; cf. Job xvii. 7.

grief] The word is used frequently in Job (see notes on ch. v. 2, vi. 2), and means properly the grief caused by severe or unjust treatment: the next clause explains the specific cause; that which made his prolonged confinement so hard to bear was that his enemies were seducing his people, and maturing their plots.

waxeth old] Thus Theocritus, "they who are longing grow old in a day:" οἱ δὲ ποθεῦντες ἐν ἤματι γηράσκουσι. 'Id.' XII. 2.

8. *Depart*, &c.] The sudden change of tone is characteristic of David. There is no interval between the struggle and its result. No sooner does he feel that his prayer has reached the Lord than he is assured of its efficacy.

9. *The LORD hath heard*] This word, twice repeated, gives the fact, the next clause, "will receive," *i.e.* accept and grant, states the effect, of the prayer, which is represented as an accepted sacrifice. Cf. Ps. v. 3. Thus Hupfeld.

10. *Let all*] Or, All mine enemies **shall be** ashamed—**shall turn back**. Here, as in the preceding psalm, our version, following the LXX. and Jerome, substitutes a prayer for an assertion: David simply states his certainty of the result.

sore vexed] The same word which David used to describe his own misery, *v.* 3.

The close is firm, compact, with a ring as of clashing swords.

PSALM VII.

This psalm is generally admitted to belong to the early life of David, when at the court of Saul he was calumniated by the courtiers of the king, whose jealousy and malice were becoming manifest. His chief enemy is represented as a person of great influence, and his own position is evidently one that exposed him to envy. There are indications that the persecution had continued some time, and was likely to continue. The psalm is remarkable for vivacity, rapid and vigorous transitions, and vivid imagery—points recognized by Ewald and other critics as marking a genuine production of David's youth. Dr Kay, however, refers it, chiefly on the ground of connection with other psalms, to the period of the king's flight, with special reference to the curses of Shimei; thus too Mr Thrupp.

The structure of this psalm is disputed. The first part of five verses closes with Selah. Ewald divides the remainder (at *v.* 11) into two parts, each of six verses; but the last verse stands probably alone, as an ejaculation; thus Köster.

Shiggaion] A musical term, which probably denotes a lyrical composition expressing mental excitement. The Arabic word for lyric poems appears to be connected with it; but the etymology is uncertain.

Cush] The name does not occur in the book of Samuel, a fact which points to the independence, and probably also, as Ewald observes, to the antiquity of this inscription. It designates some partizan of Saul's own tribe, one who shared the suspicion and envy of the king. It has been supposed to designate the king himself, but it seems to be a proper name. Its meaning, "Ethiopian," may possibly refer to some personal characteristic, darkness of soul, or of complexion; cf. Jer. xiii. 23; Amos ix. 7.

2. *Lest he*] The same sudden change from the plural to the singular has been noticed in Ps. v. 6; see also xvii. 11, 12. Among David's enemies one took the lead. This may refer to Saul, of whom it might most naturally be

rending *it* in pieces, while *there is* † none to deliver.

† Heb. *not a deliverer.*

3 O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)

5 Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take *it;* yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.

6 Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me *to* the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.

7 So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

8 The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, [a] according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity *that is* in me.

9 Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: [b] for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

10 † My defence *is* of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

11 ‖ God judgeth the righteous,

a Ps. [illegible] b 1 Sam. 16. [illegible] 1 Chr. 28. 9. Ps. [illegible] Jer. [illegible] & 17. [illegible] & 20. [illegible] † Heb. *My buckler is upon God.* ‖ Or, *God is a righteous judge.*

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said that he was like a lion, from whom there could be no man to deliver. It could scarcely apply to Shimei, whose weapons were simply railings. Compare Job x. 16. The expressions recall David's early experience, 1 S. xvii. 34—37.

3. *this*] David alludes first to the charge in general, this thing of which I am accused, then specifies it more distinctly as a criminal act (idiomatically evil, or iniquity, in the hand, as the instrument of crime; cf. 1 S. xxiv. 12, 13), then as one of base ingratitude and treachery. Such accusations accord with his position at Saul's court, and with the well-known suspicions of the king, but can scarcely be explained with reference to David's flight from Absalom.

4. *I have delivered*] This interpretation has been questioned, but is defended by able critics; and whether or not it may refer to the transactions related in 1 S. xxiv. 4, 7, and xxvi. 9, when David twice spared Saul's life, it truly expresses his generous character. Dr Kay renders the word "displaced;" but the meaning, "delivered," belongs properly to the Hebrew verb, and is accepted by Ewald and Hupfeld (who regard it as the only sense justified by Hebrew usage), after Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and several modern critics, as Calvin, Mich., Ros., Thol., Köster.

5. *mine honour*] Or, "glory," as in Ps. iv. 2. Either word may be accepted, but one only should be used. This passage supports the Masoretic text in that psalm. The sense of personal dignity at so early a period in David's life is remarkable, the word (*cabod*) occurs frequently in psalms composed by the king. See Introd.

6. *awake for me*] The A. V. follows the old versions, but the construction, though not free from doubt, seems rather to be "awake for me, Thou hast ordained judgment." Thus Hupfeld and others. Cf. Job viii. 6.

7. *compass*] Our version is literal, and gives probably the true sense, viz. In that case the whole body of the people will come around Thee, recognizing Thee as the righteous Judge.

for their sakes] Or, **above it**, *i.e.* over the congregation. God is represented as pronouncing this sentence from His throne over the assembly, and then returning on high. Cf. Ps. lxviii. 18. Every triumph of right is regarded by David as the result of a personal intervention of the righteous Judge.

8. *judge me*, &c.] Cf. Ps. xviii. 20, xxvi. 1, xxxv. 24, where the Psalmist has "according to Thy righteousness."

integrity] *i.e.* freedom from guilt with reference to the special charge.

in me] Or, **upon me**, as a robe. Cf. Job xxix. 14: "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem." This construction is quite in accordance with Hebrew usage (Hupf.). and seems preferable to another which has been proposed, "let it be done to me." The consciousness of integrity is frequently asserted by David, and more especially with reference to early accusations; such assertion is justified by St Paul's declaration that touching the righteousness, which is by the law, he was blameless. Phil. iii. 6.

9. *trieth*] In the specific sense of testing, assaying; cf. Ps. xi. 5; Job xxiii. 10.

the hearts and reins] "The heart," as the seat of the understanding and the will, "the reins," of natural impulses and affections, both in contrast to mere outward appearances. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 2, and see 1 S. xvi. 7.

10. *My defence is of God*] Or, **My shield is upon God**; an expression which may denote that his shield or defence depends upon God, that he trusts to God to hold His shield over him, or that he commits his

and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

12 If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

14 [c] Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

15 [†] He made a pit, and digged it, [d] and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

16 His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

17 I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

[c] Job 15. 35. Isai. 59. 4. James 1. 15.
[†] Heb. *He hath digged a pit.*
[d] Ps. 9. 15. & 10. 2. Prov. 5. 22.

PSALM VIII.

God's glory is magnified by his works, and by his love to man.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

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defence to God, taking "upon" in the not uncommon sense of "incumbent upon."

11. The meaning of the verse, as in marg., appears to be, God is a righteous judge (hence the confidence of the righteous man), and as such He is wrathful every day. The word rendered "angry" means not merely that God feels, but that He manifests, wrath, not by occasional outbursts, but by continuous indications of His intent to punish those who continually provoke Him.

12. *made it ready*] Lit. **set it upright**, or fixed it. When the bow is bent and strung the warrior places it in the proper position. The resemblance of this passage to Deut. xxxii. 41, 42 is very striking; it has the same metaphor, and in the same order. God executing His work of judgment is there represented as a warrior, who first whets his glittering sword, and then satiates his arrows with blood.

13. *for him*] *i.e.* for the sinner.

he ordaineth...persecutors] This translation is defensible, and follows some ancient Versions. The Hebrew word occurs frequently in the sense "pursuer;" see Gen. xxxi. 36; 1 S. xvii. 53; Ps. x. 2. A more striking image is however presented by an exact rendering, **He maketh His arrows fiery ones.** This is adopted generally by modern commentators, and is supposed to allude to the old custom of covering arrow-heads with tow dipped in naphtha, which caught fire in passing through the air; cf. Ephes. vi. 16. They were used specially in attacking strongholds, as shells in bombardments, setting buildings on fire. It is to be observed that God is here represented not as actually striking, but as preparing to strike. The sinner, who disregards general warnings, may be alarmed by indications of imminent destruction.

14. *he travaileth*] The sinner, against whom God directs His arrows, is represented in the very act of perpetrating crime, previously conceived, and issuing afterwards in a lie. The Hebrew word for lie includes the meaning of emptiness and failure.

15. *He made a pit, and digged it*] Or, **He dug a pit, and scooped it out.**

16. The metaphor seems to be continued: while the sinner is in the pit, which he is digging, the mass of evil which he had thrown up falls in and crushes him.

come down] *i.e.* fall in; see note on Job xvii. 16.

PSALM VIII.

A psalm in praise of Jehovah, Whose glory is seen in the heaven above and the earth beneath, and in His care for the least of His creatures, *v.* 1. The sight of the starry skies suggests at the first glance the thought of God's unapproachable majesty and man's insignificance; but a deeper meditation confirms the assurance that God cares for man as for His chiefest work, *vv.* 3, 4, having crowned him with glory, and set all things under him, and made him His vicegerent. This idea is the point of the psalm, which is, so to say, a poetical meditation upon the description, in Gen. i., of man's creation and original estate with God.

The hypothesis, founded on *v.* 3 (in which the moon and stars only are mentioned), that David wrote this psalm at night, as he fed his flocks at Bethlehem (1 S. xvii. 15), is improbable, cf. Job xxv. 5, and needless. The thought suggested by the sight of the heavens, of God's majesty and man's littleness, is inevitable; and must have occurred to David not only in his earliest days, but often in his chequered life.

The words of the psalm have a magical charm. Though few and simple they carry us far beyond the images expressed, and suggest a world of thoughts and sentiments not expressed, which seem indeed only to be fully explained and realized by a reference to Christ the Son of Man, and Son of God, and man's Ideal in humiliation and glory.

a Matth. 21. 16.
† Heb. *founded.*

2 [a] Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou † ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4 [b] What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

b Job 7. 17. Ps. 144. 3. Heb. 2. 6.

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;

It is uncertain what instrument is intended, or what strain of music, by Gittith; it seems to have been employed on joyful stirring occasions of praise and thanksgiving (Pss. lxxxi., lxxxiv.). The Greeks had a Dorian lyre and also a Dorian melody; and Gittith may be a lyre or melody of Gath. See 1 S. xxvii. 2, 3, 4.

The Psalmist sings (*v.* 1) the praises of Jehovah in his own name, and in that of all instructed beholders of His works.

1. *thy name*] The meaning is not simply, "How excellent art Thou in Thine essential attributes of holiness, goodness, and majesty," but, "How excellent in name and fame; how excellent in Thine adorable attributes, exhibited and made known, as they are, in Thine outward works!" *Vv.* 1, 2 express concisely and abruptly, after the manner of Hebrew poetry, the idea of God's majesty and wondrous condescension, which is repeated in full terms, *vv.* 3, 4, &c.

above the heavens] Or, perhaps, *upon the heavens.* "Thou hast set Thy glory, that is, hast stamped the image of Thine infinite majesty, upon the heavens, and yet dost condescend to reveal Thyself to man by near and, to some, less significant tokens." This interpretation suits the import of the psalm, and of *v.* 3, which follows. One word (see Note at end) of the Hebrew text is obscure, and no explanation of it, or derivation, satisfactory.

2. *babes and sucklings*] The two words so rendered are distinguished in 1 S. xv. 3 and xxii. 19. The first means (Jer. vi. 11, ix. 21,) a young child above the age of infancy that plays in the streets, and asks for bread (Lam. iv. 4); the second (see 2 Macc. vii. 27) a young infant, not yet weaned, that lisps and mutters scarcely articulate sounds.

ordained strength] Or, "founded strength" (as in the margin), *i.e.* the opinion of strength or glory. Glory is imaged as a palace or tower, which God has founded, Jer. xvi. 19; and the lips of young children and infants lay its first stone. Children and infants that cry to God with scarcely articulate mutterings, and obtain from Him directly, through the arrangements of His providence, or else through the hands of parents, needful support, declare His glory as conspicuously as the starry pole. According to this interpretation the voice or cry of young infants and children, by its singularity and marvellousness (for voice is a miracle of God's providence), proclaims the infinite glory of God. But perhaps the voice or cry of young children and infants is not intended to be specially noted as indicating God's providence; but generally the psalm describes their helplessness and want of all things which God relieves, *miraculously*, through the instrumentality of parents or friends.

because of thine enemies] To refute Thine enemies (Ps. xiv. 1), who deny Thy power, or care not to see it, and to satisfy Thy friends.

that thou mightest still, &c.] "That Thou mightest, by the wonderful works of Thy power and goodness, still or silence the lips of the enemy and avenger." The word "avenger" means "an avenger of himself, who waits not for God to avenge," or, "one who thirsts for and breathes revenge;" hence, a "violent, arrogant one."

the enemy and the avenger] See Ps. xliv. 16. A well-known Hebraism for "the vengeful enemy."

3. *When I consider*, &c.] The meaning is "for as often as I consider," &c. The terms employed have the force of the present, with the idea added of "iteration."

the work of thy fingers, &c.] In Ex. viii. 19, *the finger* of God works miracles; in xxxi. 18, *it* writes the Tables of the Law.

4. *What is man*, &c.] "What is frail man that Thou rememberest (Gen. viii. 1) him, or the son of man that Thou visitest (Gen. xxi. 1, l. 24; Ps. lxv. 9) him?" The phrase is varied in Ps. cxliv. 3—9.

5. *a little lower than the angels*] Lit. "a little lower than God," or "the divine nature;" with a plain reference to Gen. i. 26, where man is described as made in the image of God, and to *v.* 28, as exercising dominion on earth and sea as God. The meaning is, that man's nature, as originally framed, was divine, or a little lower than divine. A somewhat different import is conveyed by the rendering of the LXX., from which, and from Jewish expositors, the Authorized Version comes. The word Elohim, besides the divine name or the divine essence, is used in Ps. xcvii. 7, and perhaps Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6, for "powers deified by the heathen," and in 1 S. xxviii. 13,

or. 15. c thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

b. 7 † All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

† and all of v.

8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

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for "the mighty spirits of the unseen world," but does not appear anywhere to mean distinctly "angels."

7. *All sheep and oxen*, &c.] As in the margin, "Flocks and oxen all of them," &c. Flocks, of sheep and the smaller animals, oxen and wild beasts of the field, all bow to man's dominion. The reference is still to man's original estate. But in his fallen estate he rules, by art and violence, the creation, of which, originally, he was constituted the rightful lord.

8. *The fowl of the air*, &c.] Heb. "Fowl of the air and fishes of the sea, travelling (singular) through the paths of the seas." The singular "travelling" cannot refer to fishes (plural), mentioned just before. The phrase, "paths of the seas," suggests the idea of a mariner traversing them: the surface of ocean being often, in the classics ('Il.' I. 312) at least, described as the paths of the sea, but the interior of the great deep never so described. The mention of man is wholly out of place, and the meaning is probably that which the Authorized Version conveys: "Fowl of the air and fishes of the sea, and every creature everywhere traversing the secret paths of ocean, is subject to man." The language of the last verses, 7, 8, of the psalm is poetical; and the ellipsis implied seems expressive in such a strain.

9. *O* LORD *our Lord*, &c.] A repetition of the exclamation with which the psalm commenced, after an enumeration of God's miracles in heaven, earth, and sea, and *His mercies to man.* So we learn that the last topic is the purport of the psalm; which descends from heaven to earth, the more plainly to evidence His glory, manifested in the earth by gifts to man. *Vv.* 6, 7 are quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews ii. 6, 7, 8, from the LXX.; and are applied, *v.* 6, to Christ's humiliation, and, *v.* 7, to His exaltation to glory. But the author of the Epistle, says Calvin, does not expound the psalm, but apply it; does not explain its purport, but applies in a natural way some expressions in it. The general purpose of it is to describe the dignity of man as a little lower than the angels, and yet crowned with glory: so Christ was made a little lower than the angels and crowned with unparalleled glory. The writer illustrates the psalm from the life of man's ideal and representative rather than explains it as it came from David.

A similar remark applies to the quotation of *v.* 6 in 1 Cor. xv. 27. The words of the psalm are quoted not as if, in their place, they referred directly to Christ's eventual reign, but as admitting a natural, unforced, application to it, and as properly to be used in illustration of it. Christ, the Ideal of man's nature and true Representative, is really described (but not of necessity originally intended to be described by David) in His future infinite sovereignty over the spiritual world, by the words, which, on the face of them, describe man, or rather, the first man, placed by God at the front of creation. The psalm affords the first example of a psalm written originally, it may be, without any direct reference to Christ and His day, but admitting such an easy and natural application to them, and illustrating the circumstances of them even to the unknown future so pointedly, that it is scarcely possible to suppose that the divine Spirit, Who spake by the lips of David (2 S. xxiii. 2), did not intend such application, and adapt the portraiture of man to its future divine realization.

In Matt. xxi. 16 the words of *v.* 2 are quoted by our Lord Himself not as indicating the Messianic character of the psalm, but for the purpose of noticing their truth in a conspicuous example. Children, by their Hosannas to the Son of David, shamed the Scribes and Pharisees who witnessed His miracles unmoved; as the enemies of God in David's time saw unmoved His wonders, in heaven, earth, and the wide sea.

NOTE on PSALM VIII. 1.

By the Editor.

תנה, the general sense is tolerably clear, but the construction is hopelessly embarrassed. If the reading be correct the verb is in the imperative. Dr Kay accepts this, and renders the passage, "Who mightest have set Thy glory upon the heavens." But no instance can be found of the combination of the relative pronoun with the imperative, nor does it seem to be grammatically possible. Most commentators suspect a flaw, which they supply variously, none however accepting another's conjecture. Hupfeld would read נתתה, "Thou hast set," which removes all the difficulty, and is confirmed by the rendering of the Targ. and

Syriac; but it is improbable that so common and easy a word would be displaced by the obscure חנה. Delitzsch suggests תָּנָה, *i.e.* "extends," which, as a rare word, might be easily misunderstood and written with other vowels by transcribers. Some old versions had probably a passive or neuter verb, whether the niph. of נתן, or, probably, some less common verb; LXX. ἐπήρθη, Vulg. "elevata est." Thus too the Æth. and Arab. It is clear that the LXX. had a finite verb, with כבוד as subject, in their MS. The word which most nearly corresponds to ἐπήρθη is גבה; see LXX., Jer. xiii. 5. It is specially applicable to the height of heaven, as God's abode; cf. Job xi. 8, xxii. 12; Ps. ciii. 11; Isai. v. 16, lii. 13, lv. 9. The letters, which are unlike in the late form, do not differ widely in the ancient alphabet, *i.e.* 𐤂𐤁𐤄 = גבה, 𐤇𐤍𐤄 = חנה; see Vogüé, 'Mél. arch.' pp. 11, 135, and M. F. Lenormant, 'Essai sur la propagation de l'alphabet phénicien,' Pl. 1, 1872, where the resemblance is even more striking. This was probably the reading before them; whether the true one may be questioned, but it completely satisfies the conditions of sense and construction. In such cases, however, it may be best to admit the probability of an error, and the improbability of a correction which will command general assent.

PSALM IX.

1 *David praiseth God for executing of judgment.* 11 *He inciteth others to praise him.* 13 *He prayeth that he may have cause to praise him.*

To the chief Musician upon Muth-labben, A Psalm of David.

I WILL praise *thee*, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

3 When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4 For †thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging †right.

5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou

† Heb. *thou hast made my judgment.*
† Heb. *in righteousness.*

PSALM IX.

This is a psalm of thanksgiving after the defeat of foreign enemies; see *vv.* 5, 15, and 17; at a time, however, when the writer was still beset by adversaries. The date is uncertain, but it was probably composed on David's return from an expedition against the Syrians or Philistines. Both this and the following psalm (see introd. to Ps. x.) are arranged, though loosely and incompletely, in alphabetic order, either to facilitate their recitation in the temple-service, or, more probably, to aid the memory; this being, like most other alphabetical psalms, of a didactic character; see Pss. xxv. xxxiv. cxi. cxix. cxlv., three of which are ascribed in the titles to David. Psalms thus arranged are referred by some critics to a later period; but it is admitted that no dependence can be placed upon this criterion (see Köster, p. xxiii.), and that both of these psalms are archaic in style, and have marked characteristics of Davidic composition. There appears also to be a close connection between this and the two preceding psalms; compare the first verse with the close of the seventh and the whole tone of the eighth; thus Bp. Wordsworth.

The structure is regular, ten equal strophes of four verses each, the close of two being marked by Higgaion and Selah.

Muth-labben] An obscure term, probably the name of some well-known melody. The meaning may be, "die for the son;" but there are no grounds for probable conjecture.

1, 2. These two verses, remarkable for variety and force of expression, consist of four clauses, each in Hebrew beginning with the letter A, Aleph.

1. *shew forth*] Or, **recount**; the same word which in xix. 1 is rendered "declare." It is frequently combined with "marvellous works," an expression which refers specially to acts by which God saves and protects His people. Ex. iii. 20, xxxiv. 10; Josh. iii. 5. Kay.

3. This verse states the cause of thanksgiving, but the connection of thought is somewhat obscured in our version. It should run thus, **Because my enemies are turned back,** *because* **they stumble and perish before Thy countenance.** David attributes his victory wholly to the manifestation of God's righteous anger. The victory may have been the result of a sudden panic. God looking down from the throne, on which He sat as judge of the conflict (cf. Ps. vii. 7), threw them into confusion. See Ex. xiv. 24.

4. *thou hast maintained*] Lit. as in marg. made, *i. e.* executed my judgment. The reason of that manifestation is stated. It was to vindicate the just cause.

5. There appears to be a reference to Deut. xxv. 19. A war of extermination, provoked by great crimes of the heathen, would seem to be described, such as David waged against the Ammonites; see 2 S. xii. 31. Compare also Deut. ix. 14.

hast put out their name for ever and ever.

6 [1]O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

7 But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

8 And [a]he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 [b]The LORD also will be [†]a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

12 [c]When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the [1]humble.

13 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble *which I suffer* of

[c] Gen. 9. 5

[1] Or, *afflicted.*

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6. *O thou enemy*] The construction is difficult, see Note at end of psalm, but the most probable rendering seems to be, **The enemy are extinct, in ruins for ever, and the cities Thou hast destroyed, their very memory has perished.** Cf. Ex. xv. 4—6; Deut. xxxii. 26; Isai. xiv. 20; Job xviii. 17.

7. *shall endure*] Rather, **is seated,** *i.e.* on the throne of judgment. The serene majesty of the eternal Judge is contrasted with the struggles and overthrow of evil men. Cf. Pss. xxix. 10, cii. 12, 26.

prepared] Or, "established."

8. *the world*] The special putting forth of power is thus made a pledge of the universal reign of justice, all things pointing to one end, the perfect manifestation of righteousness by a personal manifestation of God: an anticipation, of which the realization, whether it was present or not to David's mind, began with the first, and will be completed by the second, coming of our Lord.

9. *The* LORD *also will*, &c.] This rendering is probably correct, though some prefer "and may the LORD be," or "so that the LORD may be." The result of righteous judgment will be security for the injured.

a refuge] Properly, as in the margin, a high place, a fort on the summit of an inaccessible rock (like Bitsche in the late war), such as often afforded a refuge to David in early days of exile. Cf. 2 S. xxii. 3; Ps. xci. 2.

oppressed] Or, **the afflicted**, lit. crushed. The Hebrew word occurs rarely. Ps. x. 18, lxxiv. 21.

10. *know thy name*] *i.e.* know and realize what Thy name involves, viz. the attributes of God manifested by acts of righteousness and love. Ps. xci. 14.

11. *in Zion*] This proves that the psalm was composed after the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem. If, therefore, the date assigned to the preceding psalm be correct, this does not belong to the same group.

people] **Peoples**; an important change, since it shews David's sense of the extent of his mission, a foreshadowing of the work fulfilled in Christ. The verse is important as marking a stage in the development of religious thought. David has two fixed principles—one that the Presence of the Lord is specially manifested in Zion as Head of the Theocracy, the other that His mighty acts are to be declared to all nations. See note on xviii. 49; and Introd. § 8.

12. *When he maketh inquisition for blood*] Rather, **For when He requireth blood,** He remembereth them. "Requireth" expresses the Hebrew, which includes the ideas searching into and exacting retribution. The same word is used in Gen. ix. 5, "Your blood of your lives will I require." Cf. Ps. x. 13. Blood, in the Hebrew "bloods," has the special sense of "bloodshed" (see note on Ps. v. 6), and includes all crimes against life. God is the *goel* (*i.e.* avenger of blood) of all humanity. The word "them" is understood by most to refer to the oppressed in the following clause (Hupf.), or to the seekers in *v.* 10 (Kay). It is more natural to refer it to the "peoples" in the preceding clause, with which this is intimately connected.

13. *Have mercy upon me*] The change of tone is remarkable: the more usual course of the Psalmist's thought is from complaint to prayer, followed immediately by the sense of deliverance; but there is a profound meaning in this, for while the thought of God's searching judgments gives confidence to the afflicted, it brings hidden sins to remembrance: and though David probably wrote this psalm before his conscience was burdened with deadly crime (to which there is no reference in this or the following psalm), his early life had been passed in scenes of violence; he felt the need of mercy, and he was surrounded by domestic enemies. Nothing can be more true or tender than this revulsion of feeling, which is at once followed by the remembrance of the

them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

14 That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

[d] Ps. 7. 16.

15 [d] The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

16 The LORD is known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God.

18 For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall *not* perish for ever.

19 Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 Put them in fear, O LORD: *that* the nations may know themselves *to be but* men. Selah.

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goodness which was ever "lifting him up from the gates of death." It is needless, and somewhat harsh, to assume that David in this verse is simply recalling the prayer, which he had offered before the expedition, of which he is now celebrating the success.

14. *in the gates*] As generally in the east, the city-gates were the places of public assembly. It differs from the ἀγορὰ of the Greeks and the forum of the Romans, being the place where the elders and the king had their seat, where the prophets taught, and all great public announcements of weal or woe were made, where public mourning and public thanksgivings were proclaimed. See *e.g.* 1 S. iv. 18, ix. 18; 2 S. xviii. 4; Jer. xvii. 19 ff., xxxviii. 7; Job xxix. 7 ff.

daughter of Zion] The personification of a people as a female, whether mother, virgin, or daughter, is common in the Hebrew and in other languages. Here it means the people of Jerusalem, regarded in their filial relationship to the "eternal congregation" (Hupf.), of which Zion is the representative or abode.

I will rejoice] Or, "That I may rejoice." Cf. xiii. 5.

15, 16. David reverts to judgment already executed. From the expressions here used it may, perhaps, be inferred that the stratagems of his foes had been the immediate occasion of their overthrow.

16. The verse should be rendered, "Jehovah **hath made Himself known** (thus Dr Kay, who refers to Ezek. xx. 9, where the A. V. has "made myself known," Ewald and Moll), **He hath executed judgment, snaring the wicked** in his own handiwork."

Higgaion] Probably an interlude, giving musical expression to the feelings suggested by God's judgment, followed by Selah, or a sweep of harp-strings.

17. *turned*] Lit., **returned, or turned back into Sheol.** The state so designated is that of the departed; it neither declares nor excludes the doctrine of retribution immediately following the separation of soul and body. The expression **turned back,** not merely "turned," is variously understood; it implies a fitness in the punishment, which, although it may not necessarily involve, yet certainly suggests, the foreboding of a terrible and irreversible doom. Compare Acts i. 25.

19. *prevail*] Lit. "be strong." There is an antithesis between the word "man" (in Hebrew, *enosh*, viii. 4), which means weak, and his act, which implies strength: hence the point in the prayer of the following verse, let the peoples know that they are "man," or "weak," and therefore that their violence is irrational as it is futile.

in thy sight] Or, "before Thy face" (see *v.* 3), in Thy presence, as Judge of the Earth.

20. *Put them in fear*] Or, "Set terror over them," *i.e.* let terror be arrayed against them, encountering and overthrowing them. This is generally accepted as the most probable meaning; it is given by Aquila and Theodotion; but the Hebrew word requires the change of a letter (א for ה, which is found in some MSS.; see De Rossi); as it stands in the text. rec. it means "a teacher," and is rendered "a lawgiver" by the LXX., Vulg., Syr., Arab., and Æth. (Symm. a "law"); the rendering of the clause would thus be "give them a teacher," or "a lesson" (see Judg. viii. 16); a sense which appears well suited to the context, and in accordance with David's principles; see his prayer for Solomon in Ps. lxxii. 8—11.

NOTE on PSALM IX. 6.

The rendering in the foot-note follows Hupfeld. He takes האויב as a collective noun, followed by a plural verb. Thus in Jer. iii. 17, iv. 1, v. 8, and in many similar passages, even where the verb follows instead of preceding the subject. תמו, in the sense "brought to an end," is thus combined with "enemy," not with "ruins," as in most of the ancient versions. הֵמָּה is the not improbable conjecture of a friend.

PSALM X.

1 *David complaineth to God of the outrage of the wicked.* 12 *He prayeth for remedy.* 16 *He professeth his confidence.*

WHY standest thou afar off, O LORD? *why* hidest thou *thyself* in times of trouble?

2 [†]The wicked in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: [a]let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

3 For the wicked boasteth of his [†]heart's desire, and [‡]blesseth the covetous, *whom* the LORD abhorreth.

4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after God:* [‡]God *is* not in all his [b]thoughts.

† Heb. *soul's.*
‡ Or, *the covetous blesseth himself, he abhorreth the LORD.*
‡ Or, *all his thoughts are, There is no God.*
b Ps. 14. 1 & 53. 1.

PSALM X.

This psalm is closely connected with the preceding. The alphabetic arrangement in the Hebrew, though incomplete, appears to be continued, and there are marked coincidences of style and language, which in some instances are peculiar to these two psalms. These facts, together with the omission of any superscription (which in the first book of psalms occurs elsewhere only in the 1st and 33rd psalms), have satisfied most critics that this forms the second part of one composition; thus in the LXX. it is combined with the 9th, an arrangement which affects the numbering of all the following psalms. There is, indeed, a very striking difference between the tone of thought and feeling, the preceding psalm being generally triumphant and exulting, this, on the contrary, menacing and mournful; but this may be accounted for, if we suppose, as seems probable (see note on *v.* 1), that, after celebrating the defeat of foreign enemies, the Psalmist turns his mind to the internal state of Israel. Throughout the reign of David and under most of his successors, Palestine was infested by brigands, and disturbed by a factious nobility. The traits of character most prominent in the psalm are described vividly in the first chapters of the book of Proverbs, and in psalms which belong to the age of David. The structure of the psalm is the same as that of the ninth.

1. *afar off*] The preceding psalm ends with an appeal to Jehovah, as the righteous Judge, against foreign enemies; the Psalmist now turns his thoughts to his own country, in which he sees a prevalence of crimes, which indicates a suspension of judgment, and calls for divine interposition.

hidest thou thyself] Or, "hidest Thou," sc. either "eyes," so as not to see, Lev. xx. 4; or "ears," not to hear, Lam. iii. 56.

in times of trouble] Referring to ix. 9, where the same phrase, a very peculiar one in Hebrew (best explained by Hupfeld), is used.

2. The first clause may be rendered "In the arrogance of the wicked the poor is on fire." Thus the LXX., Copt., Vulg., Aquila, Sym., and most of the later commentators. Hitzig agrees with the marginal rendering. The rendering of the second clause has the authority of some ancient versions (generally Rabbinical, Targ., Kimchi, with Aq. and Sym.), but the true rendering seems rather to be, **They,** *the poor,* **are ensnared in the devices, which they,** *the wicked,* **have imagined.**

3. *the wicked boasteth*] Or, **exults,** lit. "sings," as it were, a hymn of praise in honour of his own greed.

and blesseth the covetous] This rendering (which follows the Targ., Aben Ezra, and Kimchi) is approved by some of the ablest critics (Hupf., Perowne, Moll); it gives a forcible and scriptural sense. The wicked not only commits the crime himself, but pronounces others happy in proportion to their successful villainy; in St Paul's words, "not only do the same, but have pleasure (συνευδοκοῦσιν) in them that do them," Rom. i. 32; a passage in which the feeling is directly connected, as in this, with contempt of God's judgments. Cf. Ps. xlix. 18.

whom the LORD abhorreth] Rather, as nearly all critics agree, **he despiseth Jehovah.** The antithesis is complete, "blesseth" and "despiseth" having for objects severally the covetous man and Jehovah, thus confirming the exposition here given of both clauses. Other critics, as Ew., Ges., take "the covetous" man as the subject, and the verb (*bairek*) in the sense "renounce;" see note on Job i. 5; the covetous man renounces, he contemns Jehovah. The sense in itself is good, but less suited to the context. Dr Kay takes the verb in the sense "gives thanks," sc. to himself. For this he has the authority of Jerome, "avarus applaudens sibi," and Aq., πλεονέκτης εὐλογήσας; thus too our marg.: but the verb is transitive, and is followed by an object in all other passages where it occurs.

4. This verse draws out the full meaning of the preceding clause. It should be rendered, **The wicked in the height of his scorn.** "As for the wicked in the height of his scorn, 'God will not require'—'there is no God!'—(such are) all his thoughts." The word "wicked" is thrice repeated with special emphasis. The Hebrew word rendered "through the pride of his countenance" means literally in the height, lifting up, of his nostrils, corresponding to the Latin "naso

5 His ways are always grievous; thy judgments *are* far above out of his sight: *as for* all his enemies, he puffeth at them.

6 He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for *I shall* † never *be* in adversity.

7 [c] His mouth is full of cursing and † deceit and fraud: under his tongue *is* mischief and ‖ vanity.

8 He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes † are privily set against the poor.

9 He lieth in wait † secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

10 † He croucheth, *and* humbleth himself, that the poor may fall ‖ by his strong ones.

11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: [d] he hideth his face; he will never see *it*.

12 Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the ‖ humble.

13 Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require *it*.

14 Thou hast seen *it*; for thou

† Heb. *unto generation and generation.*
c Rom. 3. 14.
† Heb. *deceits.*
‖ Or, *iniquity.*
† Heb. *hide themselves.*
† Heb. *in the secret places.*

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suspendit adunco," or the German Hochnäsigkeit. "He will not require" refers to *v.* 13, where the same Hebrew word is used.

all his thoughts] David does not speak of the words, but of the innermost thoughts, of the wicked; their practical, it may be half-conscious atheism.

5. *grievous*] Rather "firm," stedfast and consistent; the wicked, as such, has no fear of man or God. Thus Hupf. and others. Ges. "durable," as in Job xx. 21. Ew. takes the word in the sense "victorious."

far above out of his sight] The latter words qualify and explain the preceding. God's justice is not suspended, but it is above and beyond the wicked man's sphere of vision.

6. *for I shall never be in adversity*] Or rather, **I shall never be moved, unto generation and generation** (*of my descendants*), **which** *will be* **exempt from calamity.** The wicked looks forward to a future of unbroken prosperity, not only for himself, but for his descendants. This appears to be the true meaning, nor would the description of the bad man's feelings be complete without it; cf. Pss. xvii. 14, xlix. 11, and Job xxi. 8.

7—10. A graphic description of disorders which in the Psalmist's time made life bitter in Palestine. The traits might seem to belong to prowling Bedouin, but probably describe the wild, half-savage nobles, who retained habits formed or developed in the troubled period which preceded the establishment of the kingdom. This passage is therefore to be regarded as one among many indications of an early date.

7. *under his tongue*] A definite image, suggesting a store of venom: cf. Job xx. 12, 13.

8. *villages*] The Hebrew word is specially used of inclosed and fortified villages, in which the agricultural population dwelt together for protection against such assaults. The robber watches them in ambush. Cf. Ps. xvii. 11, 12.

the poor] The Hebrew word occurs only in this psalm here and at *v.* 14: the etymology is doubtful, but the sense is clearly determined by the context.

9. *He lieth*, &c.] Correctly and well rendered by Dr Kay: **he lurks in the covert as a lion in his lair**: not *den* as in A.V.: the lion lies wait, not in his den, but in the thick brushwood of the jungle.

the poor] The word, frequently so rendered, does not here imply poverty, which would have no attraction for the robber, but "gentleness:" it is the normal term for those who do not inflict injury, and are unable to resist it.

catch] The metaphor changes; the man-hunter, more crafty than the lion, catches his prey by drawing him into his net. Cf. Ps. ix. 15.

10. The rendering is questioned (see Note below), but the first clause refers probably to the poor—"And crushed he sinks down, and falls by his strong ones, helpless."

11. The central thought recurs, the key-note of the bad man's refrain; see *v.* 4.

12. *the humble*] The same word which in *v.* 9 (where see note) is rendered "poor."

13. *Wherefore*] *i.e.* Why is it permitted that the wicked should **despise** God? the same word as "abhorreth" in *v.* 3. Thus too in the next clause, "Thou wilt not require" corresponds exactly to ix. 12, "when He maketh inquisition for blood." In the A.V. the change of words obscures the connection of thought.

14. *Thou hast seen it*] With emphatic reference to the bad man's thought, "He will never see," *v.* 11.

beholdest mischief and spite, to requite *it* with thy hand: the poor †committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

15 Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil *man*: seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

16 *c* The LORD *is* King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.

17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt ‖prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

18 To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more ‖oppress.

Heb. *leaveth*.

Ps. 29. 10. 145. 13. 146. 10. Jer. 10. 10. Lam. 5. 19.

‖ Or, *establish*.

‖ Or, *terrify*.

spite] Rather, "grief;" the word is used specially of impatience, or fretting under wrongful suffering; see note on Job vi. 2. God sees on the one side the crime, on the other the disturbance of moral feeling, with the intent "to requite it," or more exactly, to take *the whole matter* into His hand, as in the Prayer-book version: so Hupfeld. The meaning "requite" is secondary, and does not express the entire or true sense of the Hebrew.

the poor] The poor man **leaveth** *all* to Thee. See note on *v.* 8, where the same word is used.

the fatherless] As in *v.* 18, the type of all who are desolate; cf. Job vi. 27.

15. *seek out*] A word specially characteristic of the psalm, in the sense "require," and "punish." **Thou shalt search out** *and punish* **his wickedness,** *until* **Thou shalt not find** (cf. xxxvii. 36; Isai. i. 12) *aught to punish*, until all vestige of his existence is annihilated. This appears to be the simplest explanation; it is literal, agrees with the old VV., LXX., Vulg., Targ., Sym., Theod., and is accepted by many critics. Other interpretations, such as that proposed by Hupf., are less satisfactory.

16. The close of the psalm is confident and triumphant. Sure that God sees, the Psalmist is sure that He will punish and exterminate wickedness. This transition of feeling, common in the Davidic psalms, has its preparation in the last clause of the preceding verse; it is indeed a recurrence to the commencing strain of the 9th psalm.

the heathen] A special point of connection between the two psalms, see ix. 19, 20. What the Psalmist there prayed for he regards here as accomplished. Ewald ('Gram.' p. 264) takes the last words as an imprecation, a rare instance of an idiom common in Arabic: but the A.V. has the old VV. and most critics in its favour. The phrase is normal; cf. Deut. iv. 26, viii. 20; Josh. xxiii. 13, 16.

17. *thou wilt prepare*] Or, as in marg., "establish," in the sense of strengthen and comfort: God strengthens the heart, confirming faith by the fulfilment of prayer.

18. *the man of the earth*] The same word (*enosh*), frail mortal man, which is used twice in the last verses of the preceding psalm. David there prays that the heathen may fail, and know that they are mere mortals; here, that being weak, of the earth, earthy, they may be no more terrible. The play of words in the Hebrew is striking, as though in Latin it were rendered "ne terreat homo e terra," or in English loosely "no more on earth let the vile use violence." It is, however, correctly urged by Mr Erle, in an admirable letter on the revision of our translation, that such play upon words does not accord with the genius of our language, and ought not to be adopted in a version intended for popular use.

NOTE on PSALM X. 10.

Each word presents some difficulty. The first clause is referred to the captor by our A.V. following the old VV., the Rabbins, and by some modern commentators. ודכה is in fact ἁ. λ., but there is little doubt that דכה=דכא, *i.e.* Aq. θλασθείς. In the second clause חלכאים, also ἁ. λ., is admitted to mean poor or wretched, but as subject it does not accord with נפל. It may be taken, as in the foot-note, to be an epithet added to complete the picture. בעצומיו, lit. "his strong ones," is variously rendered; "his strong jaws," *seine Krallen*, Ew., or "young lions," Ros., or as A. V. "his men of might;" and this is simplest and most probable. Thus Sym. μετὰ τῶν ἰσχυρῶν αὐτοῦ: see Field, 'Hexapla,' in loc. The general meaning is clear; but the whole verse is a remarkable instance of obscure and rugged construction, regarded even by Hitzig as a proof of early date.

PSALM XI.

1 *David encourageth himself in God against his enemies.* 4 *The providence and justice of God.*

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

IN the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee *as* a bird to your mountain?

2 For, lo, the wicked bend *their* bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may † privily shoot at the upright in heart.

† Heb. *in darkness.*

3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

4 [a] The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD's throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

[a] Hab. 2. 20.

5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

6 Upon the wicked he shall rain

PSALM XI.

This psalm resembles the preceding in tone, but refers apparently to different circumstances. We read of menaces and insults offered to David, and of a general overthrow of authority; but the spirit of the Psalmist is tranquil, conscious of uprightness (3, 4), and confident of God's righteousness (7). These facts point clearly (Ew. says "indisputably") to the position of David at Saul's court, when first seriously endangered by calumniators. The style is animated, somewhat obscure in the original, with rapid transitions, characteristic of the earlier Davidic psalms. The structure shews a master-hand. The first line and the last verse are ejaculatory, and express the permanent conviction of the Psalmist. The three verses after the exclamation refer to the counsels of timid friends (1—3): the three following declare the judgment of Jehovah (4—6).

1. *Flee*] Lit. **Flee ye to your mountain, O birds.** The plural verb is best accounted for as a proverbial expression. David's friends, probably in all sincerity like Jonathan, 1 S. xix. 2, urged him to take flight, as children jestingly might cry out to birds, "off to the mountains." In other passages fugitives are compared to birds; thus David himself, 1 S. xxvi. 20, "as one doth hunt a partridge on the mountains." Cf. Ps. cii. 6, 7. Bird is a collective noun, not to be explained by an ellipse, "like a bird" (see however critical note below) or "as a bird," a construction which would leave the plural applied to David's own soul. It is evident that such advice would not have been tendered, either by friends or covert foes, to the king when he became aware of the conspiracy of Absalom; the occasion on which some critics hold that this psalm was composed. Delitzsch.

2. This with the following verse states the grounds for such counsels; in the passage just quoted we read, Saul spake to Jonathan his son, *and to all his servants*, that they should kill David, 1 S. xix. 1.

privily] **in darkness.** Saul intended the murder to be done at night, both for the sake of secrecy and surprise; hence Jonathan's advice, l. c. "hide thyself until the morning.' See also *v.* 11 of the same chapter.

3. *the foundations*] sc. of justice and right. The Hebrew word occurs only here and Isai. xix. 10, where see marg. It there means "men of rank;" but the figure may apply to all the institutions and principles on which public order and safety rest. Sym. has οἱ θεσμοί: Jerome, "quia leges dissipatæ sunt."

what can the righteous do?] Lit. "the righteous, what doeth he?" but probably in the sense of our version: the timid friend might suggest, What will righteousness avail thee, when the very foundation of justice is overthrown? when the king who should administer justice is your foe?

4. The answer of David. The king may reign here, but Jehovah, the only true King, is in the sanctuary of His palace, His throne is in heaven.

temple] Or, "palace:" on the use of the word see note on Ps. v. 7. It is undoubtedly applied to the abode of God in heaven, probably also to the holy tabernacle: here the former application seems preferable.

try] See note on vii. 9. It is interesting to observe how early and how strongly this thought took possession of David's heart.

6. *snares*] This is the literal rendering of the Hebrew, adopted by the LXX., Vulg., Jerome, Syr., and many critics. The metaphor, though somewhat harsh, may be defended, not however as a confusion of images, but as comparing the flashes of lightning, falling suddenly, and surprising the criminal, to fiery cords thrown over the prey. Some commentators follow Symmachus (see Field, 'Hex.'), who takes the word in the sense of coals (ἄνθρακας), or brands, but without authority (Hupf.). Cf. στεροπῆς ἕλικες, 'Prom. V.' 1083; Διὸς μάστιξ, 'Il.' XII. 37: different, but somewhat similar figures.

fire and brimstone] The reference to Gen. xix. 24 is clear, and generally recognized. In the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha Prophets and Psalmist saw the great example and type of divine judgments; cf. Job xviii. 15.

horrible tempest] The Hebrew word, which is rare and obscure, probably means "a fiery blast." Ew., Hitz. The word occurs elsewhere only in Ps. cxix. 53, where it is rendered "horror," and in Lam. v. 10, where it is connected with famine: "a blast of horror"

snares, fire and brimstone, and [1]an horrible tempest: *this shall be* the portion of their cup.

[1] Or, *a burning tempest.*

7 For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

may be preferable even to that proposed above. LXX. πνεῦμα καταιγίδος.

portion of their cup] This idiom, very common in Scripture, and adopted by our Lord, occurs here probably for the first time. See, however, Job xxi. 20. David speaks of his own cup in a psalm of thanksgiving, xxiii. 5.

7. *his countenance doth behold the upright*] Rather, **the upright will behold His countenance**; thus the Targ. and late commentators, Ew., Hupf., Hitz., Per., Kay. Both English versions follow the LXX. and Vulg. "To behold the face of God" expresses the highest state of blessedness; see Ps. xvii. 15, and, more especially, 1 Joh. iii. 2.

NOTE on PSALM XI. 1.

The LXX. have ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη ὡς στρουθίον: this may suggest a different reading, instead of הרכם "your mountain," הרים כ, *i.e.* mountains, as a bird. Jerome has "in montem."

PSALM XII.

1 *David, destitute of human comfort, craveth help of God.* 3 *He comforteth himself with God's judgments on the wicked, and confidence in God's tried promises.*

To the chief Musician [1]upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

[1] Or, *upon the eighth.*

[1]HELP, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

[1] Or, *Save.*

2 They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with* flattering lips *and* with [†]a double heart do they speak.

† Heb. *an heart and an heart.*

3 The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaketh [†]proud things:

† Heb. *great things.*

4 Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips [†]*are* our own: who *is* lord over us?

† Heb. *are with us.*

5 For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* [1]puffeth at him.

[1] Or, *would ensnare him.*

6 The words of the LORD *are* pure words: [a]*as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

[a] 2 Sam. 22. 31. Ps. 18. 30. & 119. 140. Prov. 30. 5.

PSALM XII.

This psalm resembles those which precede it in the description of prevalent hypocrisy and ungodliness, and it is probably connected with them, being, as Dr Kay points out, a promise that the four times repeated prayer, "Arise, O Lord" (iii. 7, vii. 6, ix. 19, x. 12), shall be answered.

The psalm is divided, at end of *v.* 4, into two equal parts, each of four verses; the former part has the prayer, the second the answer.

Sheminith] The eighth, or octave, the bass; see Ps. vi.

1. *godly...faithful*] The former word denotes piety, the second, stedfastness in faith.

2. The construction would seem to be, "smoothness of lips with double hearts do they utter." They speak flattering words with treacherous intent.

with a double heart] 1 Chro. xii. 33; Prov. xx. 10. Lit. "with a heart and heart;" compare Homer, 'Il.' IX. 312, 313, Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει.

3. *proud things*] Though less literal than the marg. this expresses better the sense of the Hebrew; see Dan. vii. 8, 20; Rev. xiii. 5.

4. This verse describes the special form of the prevalent guilt, the abuse of the tongue, probably with a special reference to courts of law, the triumph of the ἄδικος λόγος (Aristoph. 'Nubes').

our lips are our own] More correctly, as in marg., **are with us**, we depend on them for success. Isai. xxviii. 15. The next clause refers to x. 4, 5, 12, &c.

5. *puffeth at him*] The Hebrew is obscure, but may probably be rendered, "I will put in safety him against whom man puffeth," or, "I will put him in that safety for which he pants." Cf. Hab. ii. 3, which should be rendered "panteth," *i.e.* hasteneth to its end. Hitz., Kay. Cf. x. 5.

6. *The words*] All words, or utterances of the Lord, and those in particular which the Psalmist heard in his heart and has just recorded. Cf. Ps. xviii. 30, cxix. 140.

in a furnace of earth] Or, "*in* the earth:"

7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve †them from this generation for ever.

8 The wicked walk on every side, when †the vilest men are exalted.

† Heb. *him*, that is, *every one of them.*
† Heb. *the vilest of the sons of men are exalted.*

PSALM XIII.

1 *David complaineth of delay in help.* 3 *He prayeth for preventing grace.* 5 *He boasteth of divine mercy.*

To the †chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

† Or, *overseer.*

HOW long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, *having* sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

3 Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the *sleep of* death;

4 Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; *and* those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

5 But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

6 I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

PSALM XIV.

1 *David describeth the corruption of a natural man.* 4 *He convinceth the wicked by the light of their conscience.* 7 *He glorieth in the salvation of God.*

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

THE [a] fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are

[a] Ps. 10. 4 & 53. 1.

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the furnace, or crucible, was probably fixed in the earth: see Schiller's 'Song of the Bell,' *v.* 1. Hitzig takes *erets*, "earth," to have the meaning of *rats*, "a bar," as in Ps. lxviii. 30, Heb., and renders, "melted into bars." The reading is ingenious, but unnecessary; and it loses the point. God's word is tried, its purity and efficacy are tested, by contact with the earth, and the earthy nature of man.

7. *them*] The poor and needy, *v.* 5.

this generation] An expression often used, as here, in a bad sense; thus lxxviii. 8; Deut. xxxii. 5, 20; and in the New Testament, ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη.

8. *walk*] Or, **wicked men prowl about.**

when the vilest] **when villainy exalts itself among the children of men.** Thus Ewald, and Kay, who compares the description of the profligate son, Deut. xxi. 20, where the same word occurs. Hupfeld, followed by Perowne, renders the word "rabble;" but there are no indications of democratic movements in the time of David.

PSALM XIII.

This was written in a time of severe trial and exhaustion, *v.* 2, not improbably, like the two preceding, when David was pursued by Saul. It is remarkable for the contrast between the Psalmist's trouble and affliction, and the deep inwardness of his faith, hope and gratitude to the Lord, *v.* 6.

1. *How long*] Lit. How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me, for ever? The double question in a single clause, of which there are other examples (lxxix. 5, lxxxix. 46), expresses naturally and forcibly the tumult of the Psalmist's thoughts; fully drawn out it would stand, "how long? surely not for ever?"

hide thy face] Cf. Job xiii. 24; Ps. lxxxix. 46.

2. *take counsel*] Or, **settle counsels.** David represents himself as meditating plan after plan. From the following clause. "by day," it may be inferred that he speaks here of night: cf. Ps. iv. 4.

daily] Or, **by day**; the night is passed in harassing thoughts, the day in bitter sorrow.

be exalted over me] This appears to refer to the last verse of the preceding psalm, and probably to an individual, such as Doeg, or Cush. See Ps. vii.

3. *lighten mine eyes*] The eyes bedimmed by weariness or sorrow are lightened by the revival of strength, or hope. Cf. 1 S. xiv. 27, 29; Ezra ix. 8. In this passage David speaks, like Ezra, of the manifestation of God's favour.

lest I sleep the sleep of death] Or, more forcibly, as in the Hebrew, "lest I sleep the death." Cf. Jer. li. 39, "sleep an eternal sleep."

4. *those that trouble me*] **my foes.** The A.V. follows the LXX. and Vulg., but the word means simply, my adversaries, or persecutors.

I am moved] Ps. x. 6.

5. *But I have trusted*] The I is emphatic: **but as for me I have trusted in Thy grace.** The past tense is used to shew that throughout the trial the trust has been unshaken. It is the abiding habit of the Psalmist's soul.

my heart shall rejoice] Or, "let my heart rejoice." David speaks of the result when his trust shall be rewarded by the deliverance, which he knows is at hand.

PSALM XIV.

The psalm, with few but not unimportant variations, occurs twice; see liii. In this, Jeho-

corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good.

2 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God.

3 [b]They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become †filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.

5 There †were they in great fear:

[b] Rom. 3. 10.

† Heb. *stinking*

† Heb. *they feared a fear.*

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vah, but in the 53rd, God, Elohim, is used constantly. Both psalms are attributed to David, nor, with the exception of the last verse (see note), is there any internal indication of a later origin. It describes in general terms a state of profligacy connected with a practical atheism, in that respect not substantially differing from preceding psalms, to which there appear to be some references. Thus Dr Kay observes: "Like xiii., this psalm ends with longing desire for God's salvation." In *v.* 6 we have the upshot of the deliberations alluded to in xiii. 2, and in *v.* 5 we have the "righteous generation," in contrast to xii. 7.

The structure resembles that of David's earliest psalm, xi.; two parts, three verses each, 1—3, 4—6, with an ejaculatory close.

1. *The fool*] The Hebrew is singularly rich in words expressing folly, with the inseparable notion of wickedness. Here the word chosen by David, *nabal*, means imbecile, a vapid, worn-out fool, one whose heart and understanding are degraded, incapable of seeing truth. It is a word never used of mere natural obtuseness, but of spiritual corruption. Hupfeld, whose commentary is specially valuable for discrimination in explaining such epithets, gives several instances, among them Isaiah xxxii. 6, "The vile person (*nabal* as in this passage) will speak villany (*nebalah*), and his heart will work iniquity." See also note on Job ii. 10.

hath said in his heart] In his innermost consciousness, the seat of thought and conviction. A conclusion thus formed is no mere result of confusion or perplexity of the discursive faculty, but a settled conviction. Whether the *fool* speaks it out or not, he is an atheist, "God is not, such is all his thought:" see x. 4: to which there is here a reference, the thought being now more distinctly brought out.

corrupt] The same word as in Gen. vi. 11, 12: "all flesh had corrupted his way;" here "they have corrupted, have made abominable, their action." We have in this verse the outward proofs of the inward godlessness of the fool.

none that doeth good] This phrase in the Hebrew corresponds exactly to the clause "there is no God." That expresses the conviction of the fool, this declares the truth as regards himself and his class. Hupfeld considers this as an argument against the reference to Gen. vi., since one family was then good; but the Psalmist speaks of unbelievers as such.

2. *The LORD*, &c.] The fool looks into his heart and finds there no God; Jehovah looks upon the sons of Adam (the natural man), and finds none who have understanding and seek God; cf. Ps. x. 4. It is evident that David speaks only of the practical atheist: in *v.* 5 he says expressly, "God is in the generation of the righteous:" but the expressions denote a general, all but universal, corruption; such, however, as is implied in passages admitted to refer to David's earlier life; cf. Ps. xi. 4, where the same thought occurs.

3. *all gone aside*] This explains and limits the meaning; the word (*sar*) is used properly of apostates, those who have known God and forsaken Him.

filthy] Lit. rancid: used properly of milk or wine, here of the corruption of a nature originally good. Cf. Job xv. 16.

St Paul turns this psalm with terrible force against his unbelieving countrymen, Rom. iii. Some editions of the LXX. insert the other verses which St Paul adds, 10—13, collected from different psalms; but probably in order to make the text agree with the quotation. Thus too our Prayer-book version, derived from the Vulg., which follows the LXX.

4. *my people*] This proves that God's people, "the righteous generation," *v.* 5, are distinguished from the evil-doers. The expression "my people" is peculiarly suitable to a king.

who eat up my people as they eat bread] The figure of eating a people, consuming and destroying as conquerors, is common in Hebrew and other languages; cf. Num. xiv. 9; Prov. xxx. 14; Lam. ii. 16: but the construction of the second clause is doubtful: it may mean, eating my people they eat bread, nourish themselves by preying upon them: cf. δημοβόρος βασιλεύς, Hom. 'Il.' I. 231 (Kay); or, eating my people, they live on, calmly enjoying their easy and luxurious life; thus Hupfeld, who compares Ps. xxii. 26 and 29. This seems more forcible than the common explanation, and may be the meaning of the rendering βρώσει ἄρτου, LXX.

5. *There*] There, that is, where God surprises them, making His presence felt. He is, in fact, among those whom they are devouring, the righteous generation. Like wild beasts

for God *is* in the generation of the righteous.

6 Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD *is* his refuge.

7 [1]Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

[1] Heb. *Who will give*, &c.

PSALM XV.

David describeth a citizen of Zion.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, [a]who shall [1]abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

2 [b]He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

[a] Ps. 24. 3, &c. [1] Heb. *sojourn*. [b] Isai. 33. 15.

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startled by a sudden attack they are struck by a panic; for such is the true force of the words rendered "they were in great fear," lit. *they feared a fear;* the Hebrew word is used always of sudden terror; Ps. liii. 5 adds "where no fear was," *i.e.* no outward cause for alarm.

in the generation of the righteous] The expression is emphatic: He dwells in them as Lord, Saviour, and source of life and strength. "He who touches you touches the apple of Mine eye." Thus again, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

6. *Ye have shamed*] Rather, **You may shame** (*i.e.* strive to baffle) **the counsel of the humble, for Jehovah is his refuge.** The expression is elliptical: you may strive to overthrow the counsel of the meek, the special object of God's love, but in vain, for he has a sure refuge. The word counsel points to x. 2. This verse would well befit David's position on such occasions as we find fully described 1 S. xxiii. 7—14.

7. This verse presents some difficulty; it implies the special presence of Jehovah in Zion, and therefore a period later than the setting up of the tabernacle; and the other clauses, though capable of another interpretation, are more naturally understood in reference to the Babylonish captivity. It may, without any serious objection, be regarded as a late addition to the psalm, adapting it to the circumstances of Israel in exile: but that the whole was composed at that time is an hypothesis scarcely reconcileable with the description of the people, not heathens, but apostates, in the first part, or with the expression in the second part "out of Zion," when the sanctuary was destroyed.

On the other side, Dr Kay considers that the words "out of Zion" suit the feelings of David in his flight, when he had left the *ark* in Zion. The expression "bring back the captivity" is used generally of deliverance from affliction, as in Job xlii. 10. In the song of Deborah, Judg. v. 12, it is used in the literal sense. The structure of the psalm, see above, is favourable to the supposition of its integrity.

PSALM XV.

This psalm is supposed by many critics, both ancient and modern, to have been composed by David for the great festival when he brought the ark into the tabernacle at Zion; see 2 S. vi. 12—19. There are sufficient grounds for accepting this date as probable, if not certain. The psalm bears a striking resemblance to the 24th, which celebrates the solemn entrance of the ark into the gates of Zion; this may have been recited before the tabernacle when the ark was placed in it. It was specially an occasion on which the moral and spiritual conditions of permanent acceptance should be openly proclaimed. All critics bear witness to the dignity and power of the style, characteristics of David's psalms (thus Hitzig, Ew., Moll; see also the observations on 'Psalms chronologically arranged,' p. 18, ed. 1870). Some critics (*e.g.* Delitzsch and Kay) hold that it was written by David in banishment, and point to the connection of thoughts between this and the preceding psalm, which they assign to that period.

1. *abide*] Or, as in marg., **sojourn**, as a favoured settler (παροικήσει, LXX.: quis cliens diversabitur? Venema). There is a fine distinction in the terms, the believer is admitted as a *settler*, and then takes up his permanent abode (A. V. dwell, κατασκηνώσει, LXX.) in his Father's dwelling.

tabernacle] The expression refers to the tent which David pitched on Mount Zion to receive the ark; see 2 S. vi. 17.

holy hill] The hill of Zion became holy by the establishment of the ark, the symbol and pledge of the Divine Presence. The epithet was properly applied to it at once by David on this occasion; thus Moses calls Horeb "the mountain of God," Ex. iii. 1, in reference to the first manifestation of Jehovah.

2. *walketh uprightly*] Lit. perfect. There is an evident reference to the condition of Abraham's acceptance, "*Walk* before me, and be thou *perfect*," Gen. xvii. 1. The word is constantly used to denote a consistent and thoroughly conscientious life; see note on Job i. 1. Compare Ps. ci., a psalm which bears a close resemblance to this, and was probably composed at the same date; thus Ewald.

worketh righteousness] Contrasted with "workers of iniquity," Ps. xiv. 4. Jerome

3 *He that* backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor [1] taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

[1] Or, *receiveth*, or, *endureth*.

4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not.

5 [c] *He that* putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.

[c] Exod. 22. 25. Lev. 25. 36 Deut. 23. 19. Ezek. 18. 8. & 22. 12.

PSALM XVI.

1 *David, in distrust of merits, and hatred of idolatry, fleeth to God for preservation.* 5 *He sheweth the hope of his calling, of the resurrection, and life everlasting.*

[1] Michtam of David.

[1] Or, *A golden Psalm of David.*

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observes, "Justitia sola magna virtus est, et mater omnium." In the next clause, "speaketh the truth in his heart" recalls "with a double heart do they speak," Ps. xii. 2.

3. *with his tongue*] Lit. on his tongue; a forcible idiom, representing the slanderous lie as a store of venom; see Ps. x. 7: there it is said to be under the tongue, ready for use, here "on the tongue," ready to be discharged. Cf. ci. 5.

doeth evil] Cf. Prov. iii. 29.

his neighbour] A different word from that used in the preceding clause. That denotes intimacy, this mere vicinity.

taketh up] Better than the marg. The calumniator takes up the lie, and circulates it.

4. *In whose eyes*, &c.] The A.V. follows the LXX. and Vulg., and is supported by many commentators (Ew., Moll, Hupf.), but the old Jewish interpretation (Targ.) is generally accepted, and gives a more forcible meaning, "he is despised in his own eyes, and worthless, and fearers of the LORD he honoureth." Thus Hitzig, Delitzsch, Kay (who refers to 2 S. vi. 22), and the Psalter, "he that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes." David thus makes the extremest humility (poorness of spirit, Matt. v. 3) a chief characteristic of God's people; see Ps. xxii. 6, where this expression is applied to Him who was "despised and rejected of men," Isai. liii. 3.

to his own hurt] If a man made an unguarded oath he was bound to keep it if it injured himself only, but if it involved doing evil to others, the Law provided a trespass-offering; see Lev. v. 4, 5, 6. In the former case he was not allowed to *alter* it; see Lev. xxvii. 10, where the same word is used. Thus Hitz., Moll, Kay. Instead of "to his own hurt" the LXX. has "to his neighbour," τῷ πλήσιον αὐτοῦ: see also Vulg. and Sym. ap. Field. Our Psalter, as Perowne observes, combines the two renderings.

changeth not] Or, "alters it not;" see last note.

5. *usury*] The prohibition (see marg. reff.) is admitted to apply to dealings between Israelites, but the principle undoubtedly includes all abuse of usury, to which the ruin of agriculture in Italy was attributed by Roman poets, orators, and statesmen.

taketh reward] See Ex. xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19; and compare the charge of Jehoshaphat to his judges, 2 Chro. xix. 6, 7. This warning, ever needed and constantly repeated, fitly closes the king's enumeration of the conditions of citizenship in the true Israel.

be moved] See x. 6, xiii. 4 (to which there may be a reference), and xvi. 8.

PSALM XVI.

This psalm is remarkable for its evangelical spirit; in none is the faith stronger, the hope, indeed the certainty, of immortal life, more fully developed. It is ascribed to David by St Peter on two most solemn occasions; see Acts ii. 25, xiii. 35; but the date is questioned, and some critics (as Ewald, who fully recognizes its exceeding beauty) hold it to belong to the period of captivity. It is, however, full of the spirit of David; it is connected with the psalms which precede and follow it by several thoughts and expressions; and the style is recognized by critics, usually captious in the question of Davidic authorship, as "belonging unquestionably to high antiquity" (Hitzig), and bearing clear traces of transactions in David's reign. The freshness and vivid colouring, the warmth and brilliancy of imagery, may point to the early portion of David's reign ere yet the dark cloud had fallen on his spirit; not improbably soon after his peaceful settlement, "when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies," 2 S. vii. 1.

Hitzig assigns the psalm to a still earlier period, and finds in *vv.* 2, 3 a reference to the spoils which David sent from Ziklag to his friends among the elders of Judah, 1 S. xxx. 26. He also points out the temptations to "hasten after another god," to which David says expressly that he was exposed in exile, 1 S. xxvi. 19. This consideration has much weight; both remarks shew the impression of one of the acutest of German critics as to the Davidic character of this great psalm. That it is typical and Messianic will not be questioned by those who recognize the authority of the New Testament.

PRESERVE me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.

2 *O my soul*, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my Lord: [a]my goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

a Job 22. 2. & 35. 7. Ps. 50. 9.

3 *But* to the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent, in whom *is* all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied *that* ‖hasten *after* another *god*: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

‖ Or, *give gifts to another.*

5 [b]The LORD *is* the portion †of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

b Deut. 32. 9. Lam. 3. 24. † Heb. *of my part.*

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places*; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

The structure is nearly regular, three parts, the first and second each with four verses, the third with three only.

Michtam] The interpretation in the marg., "a golden psalm," rests on Rabbinical authority; it is adopted by the Fathers generally, and seems not unsuitable to the five psalms, lvi.—lx., where it occurs; it is especially adapted to this psalm, so remarkable for richness in spiritual thoughts and imagery. A meaning nearly allied to this, viz. jewel or treasure, is accepted by other modern critics; thus Hitzig, after Grotius and Simonis.

2. *O my soul*] Instead of supplying these words modern commentators follow the ancient versions, which have, "I said to Jehovah, Thou art my Lord," Heb. Adonai. Cf. Isai. xxxviii. 10, 11.

my goodness extendeth not to thee] There is no doubt that this rendering is incorrect; the Hebrew may mean, "My well-being is not above Thee," or "beyond Thee;" *i.e.* is as nought compared with Thee; or "is not apart from Thee," sc. "depends wholly upon Thee." Thus Dante, "come dicesse a Dio: d' altro non calme," 'Purg.' VIII. 12. On the construction and the connection with the following verse see Note at end of psalm.

3. *But to the saints*] The connection is much disputed: it would seem to be this: My well-being, which is wholly from Thee, is for (*i.e.* is granted for the benefit of) saints, those who are in the land (sc. all true Israelites), and for the noble (sc. noble in spirit), in whom is all my delight. The word "saints," as in the New Testament, includes all the people of the covenant: see Lev. xix. 2, and elsewhere in the Pentateuch.

4. *Their sorrows shall be multiplied*] This rendering is probably correct; it follows LXX., Syr. and Vulg., and is preferred generally by late critics. The word "sorrows" may, however, refer to idols, thus Targ., Jerome, Symm.

that hasten after another god] Or, "who woo another god." The Hebrew word rendered "hasten" occurs in the same form only in Ex. xxii. 16, where the A.V. has "endow her to be his wife," *i.e.* pay a dowry for her. Modern commentators generally prefer this rendering: but the sense "hasten" is found in all the old versions, and is defended by Ges. 'Thes.' p. 772, who observes, that the word never occurs with the sense of wooing in reference to idolatrous offerings. The relation of the worshipper to his idol is generally represented as that of an adulteress, not of a suitor; see, however, Hos. viii. 9; Ezek. xvi. 33, 34.

of blood] This is generally understood to mean hateful, as though mingled with blood, or, "as though offered by murderers;" cf. Isai. lxvi. 3. Bloody libations are not recorded to have been offered by heathens; but the term may possibly be applied to wine mingled with blood, of which there is frequent mention. It may, however, be noticed that on Egyptian monuments the priest is represented as piercing the head of a kneeling figure, whose blood spurts out as a libation.

their names] sc. of the false gods; cf. Ex. xxiii. 13.

5. David exhausts the copious list of Hebrew synonyms to describe the completeness of the happiness which he has in the Lord, thus drawing out the meaning involved in *v.* 2. Each tribe, each family had its own inheritance; but to Aaron and his seed the Lord had said, "I am thy part, and thine inheritance among the children of Israel," Num. xviii. 20, where see reff. David claims that inheritance for himself as head of the Theocracy, and type of Him who is anointed Priest, and King, and Lord of all.

6. *The lines*] The lines which marked the boundaries of a property; cf. Josh. xvii. 5, where A.V. has "portions." The words naturally imply a new grant, and accord with the view that this psalm was composed when David took up his abode in Jerusalem.

in pleasant places] The A. V. renders the same word "pleasures" in Job xxxvi. 11.

I have a goodly heritage] Or, "my heritage is beautiful to me," goodly in itself, and in my appreciation.

7. *who hath given me counsel*] This may refer to a special intimation of God's will touching his settlement; cf. 1 S. xxiii. 9—12

[c] Acts 2. 25.

8 [c]I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall [†]rest in hope.

[†] Heb. *dwell confidently.*

[d] Acts 2. 31. & 13. 35.

10 [d]For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

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and 2 S. v. 19. On such an occasion the king would not fail to seek counsel of the Lord.

my reins] The reins (lit. kidneys) are to the Hebrews the seat of feeling and emotions; see Job xix. 27; and this verse implies that the happy settlement had been preceded by anxious meditations at night, ever associated in David's mind with self-examination, and the searching of man's spirit by God; see Ps. iv. 4, xvii. 3, and compare Job xxxiii. 14—16, 19.

8—10. This passage is quoted by St Peter (see marg. reff.) as directly, or in its highest sense, applicable to the Messiah. It contains one of the very clearest and strongest declarations of belief in a blessed futurity which can be adduced from the Old Testament. As such it is recognized by ancient and modern interpreters, none speaking out more clearly than Ewald, p. 249: "It goes beyond other words of David, nor is anything corresponding to it found in later Hebrew writers." There is but one adequate explanation of such a fact, viz. that the Spirit of Christ, which was in David as a prophet (see 1 Pet. i. 11 and Acts ii. 30), moved and controlled his utterances, so that, while they expressed fully his own yearnings, they *signified beforehand the glory that should follow* in the resurrection of Christ. Moll, p. 101, draws out this view with his usual ability and insight.

8. *have set...always*] Both words express most forcibly the continuous realization of the divine Presence.

shall not be moved] Cf. Ps. x. 6.

9. *my glory*] *i.e.* my soul, or spirit; man's spiritual nature, which is his true glory, in which is found the image and likeness to God. The expression first occurs in Gen. xlix. 6, where it is used by Jacob as synonymous with "soul;" see note in loc. We have thus in this passage the threefold division of man's nature: the heart, as the seat of the understanding; the soul, as the abode of spiritual instincts; and the flesh, or body. Each has its own blessing; even the lowest is secure of endurance; for though the words "shall rest in hope" mean primarily "will dwell in security," or "confidence," that confidence involves the thought of permanence or restoration. David speaking *as a prophet* (Acts ii. 30) uses words which point to another life. The last words "shall *rest* in hope" correspond to xv. 1, "shall *dwell* in Thy holy hill," where the same verb is used in the Hebrew.

10. *in hell*] "To Sheol," here, as always, the abode of the departed. God will not leave the soul in that intermediate state into which it passes at death.

thine Holy One] This is a true rendering; the word means one who is the object or bearer of divine grace (Ps. lxxxix. 19, l. 5, where A.V. has "saints"), or even the bestower of grace; in which sense, though rarely, it is applied to God Himself, as in Ps. cxlv. 17; Jer. iii. 12, where A. V. has "merciful." It must be referred to Christ on the authority of St Peter, who in both passages cited in the marg. assumes this application as a fact universally admitted by those whom he addresses. The reading of the Hebrew is contested whether "holy ones," or "holy one," but the latter has the support of all ancient versions, of the greater number of MSS., especially of the best and most ancient, of the New Testament, and of able critics.

corruption] This rendering should be retained; it follows the LXX. (διαφθοράν, Vulg. corruptionem, Syr. id.; the Chaldee is doubtful, see Buxtorf, 'Lex. Ch.' p. 2374; but as the text stands the meaning "corruption" is the more probable); thus Dr Kay, Klauss, and Moll, who fully justifies it by reference to other passages (as Job xvii. 14; Ps. xlix. 9, lv. 23, where it is distinguished from the pit, and rendered A.V. "destruction;" better, as here, "corruption"). Some commentators (Ew., Hupf., Perowne) render the word "pit," *i.e.* "grave;" a translation to which there is the very serious objection that it makes God promise that His Holy One shall not be buried, and that it contradicts St Peter and St Paul (Acts ii. 31, xiii. 35—37); thus being in fact equally opposed to common sense and to Holy Writ. The meaning was so clear to the Jewish Rabbins, that, unable as they were to reconcile it with David's history, they invented the fable that his body was preserved from corruption. Moll.

11. *the path of life*] From the context it may be inferred that the Psalmist speaks of the way to eternal life in contrast to corruption and the abode in Sheol. That life is the life in God, of which the holy become partakers when admitted into His Presence, where

Christ seated at His right hand dispenses pleasures (the same word as in *v.* 6, Kay) for evermore.

The psalm is Messianic in the highest sense; and were it not capable of a twofold application, to David and to Christ, the latter alone would satisfy the demands of a sound exegesis. It adheres at once closely to the literal interpretation, and accords with the revealed mind of the Spirit.

NOTES on PSALM XVI. 2, 3.

2. It is agreed that *tobathi* means physical good, prosperity or happiness, or, nearer still, "well-being," as above. The meaning of עליך is contested: lit. upon thee. (1) A meaning grammatically possible is "a debt or duty incumbent upon Thee;" thus Böhl and Isaki (quoted by Moll), and Dr Kay, who render, "my prosperity has no claims upon Thee," *i.e.* is a free gift of Thy bounty. (2) Over and above, beyond; or, exists not save in Thee; has no other source. Thus Symm., *οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνευ σου.* The Chald., "is not given save by Thee." Syr., "is of Thee." In Arabic the preposition على has the secondary and somewhat rare meaning "præter;" cf. Ewald, 'Gram. Arab.' § 591, عليك, te neglecto, te posthabito; but no clear instances of such usage are found in Hebrew. Böttcher seems to accept this view; he compares for the sense in Ps. lxxiii. 25. (3) "Over Thee" is the most obvious and natural construction, and, if accepted, must be understood to mean, "more esteemed or loved than Thou:" a litotes which affirms the opposite, "I love Thee far above all that belong to my well-being." (4) Hupf. suggests that בל may mean "only," which would give "my happiness is in Thee alone;" but no instance of such a meaning can be adduced. (5) Perowne would read כל for בל. Two MSS., one of Kennicott, one of De Rossi, have כל, but the emendation is scarcely admissible as an evasion of a difficulty. The general sense, My happiness is of Thee only, in some form or other is generally accepted.

3. LXX. *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἐν τῇ γῇ αὐτοῦ, ἐθαυμάστωσε πάντα τὰ θελήματα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτοῖς.* Vulg. "in terra ejus, mirificavit omnes voluntates *meas* in eis." Syr. follows the text rec. omitting המה. The Masoretic text appears to be corrupt; it is not only obscure, but seems to introduce an alien thought. The LXX. may have read, לקדושים אשר בארץ המה יאדיר כל חפצו בם, "For the saints who are in the land, He hath magnified all His delight in them." Taking the Hebrew text as it stands the construction least open to objection is that which connects this verse with the preceding, as in the foot-note.

PSALM XVII.

1 *David, in confidence of his integrity, craveth defence of God against his enemies.* 10 *He sheweth their pride, craft, and eagerness.* 13 *He prayeth against them in confidence of his hope.*

A Prayer of David.

HEAR † the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* † not out of feigned lips.

† Heb. *justice.*

† Heb. *without lips of deceit.*

2 Let my sentence come forth

PSALM XVII.

This psalm is attributed to David in the inscription, and is generally admitted to have the marked characteristics of his early style. In some points it resembles the preceding psalm, but it was evidently written under different circumstances: some peculiar expressions are found in both, in both there is the declaration of entire faith in a future life (which may probably account for their juxtaposition in the Psalter); but in this there is a deeper tone of indignation, the current of thought and language is more vehement and abrupt, the writer is sorely tried inwardly (3—5), and outwardly oppressed and persecuted. The feelings, which must have possessed David when Saul "pursued after him in the wilderness of Maon," 1 S. xxiii. 26, could not be expressed more vividly; and Hitzig, whom Moll follows, is probably right in assigning the psalm to that period of David's life.

The psalm is called a prayer (Tephillah); it may be as the ancient and generic name for these compositions, which afterwards bore different designations with reference to their liturgical use, or musical accompaniment; but more probably because David himself calls it a prayer (*v.* 1), and devout supplication is its special characteristic. Four other psalms (lxxxvi., xc., cii., cxlii.) bear the same title: see also the subscription of Ps. lxxii., 20. The structure is regular, with clauses of three lines each; but the divisions are not strongly marked, except at the end of *v.* 12.

1. *the right*] *i.e.* Hear and vindicate the righteous cause. David identifies his cause with that of righteousness, which was assailed in him, and speaks in him.

from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

3 Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited *me* in the night; thou hast tried me, *and* shalt find nothing; I am purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress.

4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept *me from* the paths of the destroyer.

5 Hold up my goings in thy paths, *that* my footsteps †slip not.

† Heb. *be not moved.*

6 I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and hear* my speech.

7 Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou ‖that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee* from those that rise up *against them.*

‖ Or, *that savest them which trust* in thee *from those that rise up against thy right hand.*

8 Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

9 From the wicked †that oppress me.

† Heb. *that waste me.*

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my cry] This Hebrew word, which generally means a joyful shout, here expresses the loudness and earnestness of the entreaty; "prayer," in the next clause, the devoutness of the feeling to which it gave utterance. Both words are thus combined in Ps. lxi. 1, Jer. vii. 16.

that goeth, &c.] Or, "from lips without guile."

2. *my sentence*] Or, "my judgment;" the word implies a declaration of the righteousness of his cause.

the things that are equal] Or, **uprightness**; sc. the uprightness of the supplicant for justice.

3. This verse expresses the consciousness not of sinlessness, but of sincerity; the Psalmist needs, and invites, the fiery process of testing and refining, but with a certainty that it will result in a recognition of his integrity.

in the night] See note on xvi. 7.

thou hast tried me] Assayed me, as gold or silver by fire. See xii. 6, xxvi. 2; Job xxiii. 10; Zech. xiii. 9; and 1 Pet. i. 7.

and shalt find nothing] Lit., Thou wilt not find, sc. any dross, sc. any guilty remembrance or purpose.

I am purposed] See last note. This rendering (if retained as by Dr Kay, who compares Jer. iv. 28) implies deliberate purpose under strong provocation.

that my mouth shall not transgress] Or, "my mouth transgresseth not." David asserts that the result of the trial will be that he is declared innocent in thought and in word. This rendering seems on the whole preferable, since the object of his prayer is to obtain a recognition of his right, *v.* 1.

4. *Concerning the works of men*] Or, **man**, lit. Adam; the natural man. David continues his defence. His intent is pure, his words innocent, and, as to his course of life, his acts as a natural man, he has been guided by God's word, and kept himself from the ways of the violent. David may possibly refer to a special temptation to do a violent and cruel act, such for instance as when "*some bade* him kill Saul, and his *eye spared* him, being the Lord's anointed" (1 S. xxiv. 10). The construction of these clauses presents some difficulties, but the general meaning appears to be correctly expressed by the A. V.

5. *Hold up*, &c.] Rather, "holding fast to Thy tracks in my goings my footsteps have not been moved." The construction is somewhat difficult, but the general meaning is clear, that David keeping steadily in tracks marked for him by God is preserved from overthrow. David states a fact and accounts for it, thus completing his defence. The word "moved" is characteristic of David's style (see x. 6, xv. 5); it implies a violent shock.

6. *I have called*] The I is emphatic. "I have called, I, such as I feel myself to be." It marks the transition; his "apologia pro vita sua" is completed, he turns to prayer.

7. The marginal rendering of this verse, which agrees with the Prayer-book, is probably correct, but the A. V. gives a good sense, and is defended by able critics. The question whether the preposition before "right hand" should be rendered "by" or "against" is open; both constructions are tenable; the latter has in its favour Ps. xxvii. 12; Mic. vii. 6; LXX., Vulg. Hupfeld, however, says *without doubt* it means "by Thy right hand;" thus too Dr Kay.

8. *apple of the eye*] The Hebrew expression is even more full of tenderness; "the pupil, daughter of the eye." Both figures in this verse are found in most touching passages of the O. T.: the earliest in Deut. xxxii. 10, 11; a book ever present to the mind of the Psalmist. The ancient Egyptians had the term "child of the eye" for darling; see Vol. I. 'Essay on Egyptian History,' note 20. Compare κοράσιον and "pupilla."

under the shadow, &c.] Cf. Ruth ii. 12; Matt. xxiii. 37.

9. *that oppress me*] Or, "who destroy me," or, "waste me," as the A. V. renders this word, Isai. xv. 1.

me, *from* † my deadly enemies, *who* compass me about.

10 They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.

11 They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

12 † Like as a lion *that* is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion † lurking in secret places.

13 Arise, O LORD, † disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, ‖ *which is* thy sword:

14 ‖ From men *which are* thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, *which have* their portion in *this* life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid *treasure:* ‖ they are full of children, and leave the rest of their *substance* to their babes.

15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

† Heb. *my enemies against the soul.*
† Heb. *The likeness of him* (that is, *of every one of them*) is *as a lion* that *desireth to ravin.*
† Heb. *sitting.*
† Heb. *prevent his face.*
‖ Or, *by thy sword.*
‖ Or, *From men by thine hand.*
‖ Or, *their children are full.*

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deadly enemies] The Hebrew has "enemies in soul," *i. e.* in fierce intent, lusting for my destruction. The marg. "against my soul," *i. e.* against my life, is defensible (see Kimchi, ap. Hupf.), but less probable.

10. *They are inclosed in their own fat*] Lit. "they have closed their fat," sc. their heart, which from self-indulgence is become a mere feelingless lump of fat. See Ps. cxix. 70. They are no more capable of kindly emotions, or they exclude them altogether. There is truth both physiological and moral in this representation. The heart in "fatty degeneracy" becomes sluggish, and loses its susceptibility. Hupfeld shews that in Arabic the word here rendered "fat" means the pericardium, or simply the heart; and traces the Hebrew word for heart to the same meaning, lêb, heart, properly "a fatty lump." Thus too Schnur., Ros., Ges. On the general connection between the physical and moral symptoms, see Deut. xxxii. 15; Ps. lxxiii. 7; and Job xv. 27.

11. *compassed*] Thus "Saul and his men *compassed* David and his men round about to take them," 1 S. xxiii. 26.

bowing down to the earth] Or, "**to cast** *me* down to the earth." The figure refers to the lion which fixes his eye on the prey, so that it falls paralysed by terror. The Hebrew may be rendered "they set their eyes that *their prey* may fall on the earth."

12. *Like as a lion*, &c.] **His likeness is as a lion eager to rend.** In both clauses the lion is represented, as in the preceding verse, crouching with its eye fixed on the prey, eager to spring and rend it. Cf. Ps. x. 7—9. One person is clearly designated, doubtless Saul, whose image in David's mind was associated with that of a lion, both for evil and for good; see 2 S. i. 23.

13. *disappoint*] Or, "prevent," "come before his face;" the lion has its face towards the prey, in act to spring, the LORD is entreated to stand suddenly in front of it, and arrest its leap. Cf. Ps. xviii. 4, 5. It would be well to retain the word "prevent" here as in all similar passages. Thus the A. V. in Job xxx. 27.

cast him down] Or, "fasten him down;" the Hebrew graphically describes the act of pressing down the crouching beast, keeping him in the base, treacherous position he has assumed. The same word is used xviii. 39, lxxviii. 31.

which is thy sword] Rather, "by Thy sword:" although this scarcely expresses the force of the original; lit. "do Thou, Thy sword, deliver my soul, &c.," Thy sword being thus in apposition with "Thou." The A. V. represents the wicked as instruments in God's hand; a true thought in itself (see Isai. x. 5), but not adapted to the context, in which David's enemies are acting *against* God.

14. *From men*, &c.] As in the marg. From men by Thy hand, O Lord.

of the world] The "world" here means temporal existence, the world of time and sense, corresponding to αἰών in the N. T., "the children of this *world*," Luke xvi. 8. "Of the world" does not express, as our idiom might do, men who live in the world, but who are of it, deriving from it their motives and objects. The meaning comes out even more distinctly in the next clause, *whose whole portion is in this life*, who have here all that is due to them, all that they care to receive; see Luke xvi. 25.

hid treasure] Or, simply "stores," sc. food stored by God's providence for all His creatures, used to satiety by those "who have lived in pleasure upon the earth," Jas. v. 5.

leave the rest, &c.] This is a very important statement, shewing how entirely the Psalmist and Job (xxi. 17) agree as to the course of God's providence; both repudiating the doctrine of retribution in this life, exactly corresponding to man's deserts.

15. The meaning of this verse, the most important in the psalm, is much disputed. Happily there is no doubt as to the literal sense.

The language is quite free from obscurity. I, says David as before (*v.* 6) emphatically, I, such as I am, poor, persecuted but innocent, and God's friend, shall behold Thy countenance in righteousness. So far there is no substantial difference between commentators. David set against the prosperity of his enemies the single fact that he is sure of a vindication of his righteousness in God's own presence. But the next clause goes much farther. "When I awake," what can that mean? Not from sleep, David had no thought of sleeping; not from the present danger, that had no connection with repose; what could it be but from death? His enemies are satisfied in this life with the hid treasures of Providence; when David awakes out of the sleep, which will be the end of all happiness to them, he will be satisfied with God's likeness. The word likeness does not mean the "likeness and image" of Genesis i., but the Form of God Himself, called in the N. T. μορφή and εἶδος, of which all we know is that it is inconceivable, but of which we believe that it will be beheld and realized in the Person of the Son. David believed, if we may trust these words, that when life was gone, and the sleep of death terminated, all his longings would be satisfied by the manifestation of that Form.

The process of some German critics in dealing with this text is instructive. Most of them are satisfied that the psalm must belong to the time of David, and since they hold that no indications of a future life are to be found at that period, they attempt to explain away the words: the sense however is too obvious for a man of real insight into language to reject, and therefore, in spite of the conclusion to which nearly all other arguments lead, some able but unscrupulous commentators repudiate the Davidic authorship, and assign this composition to the time when, as they assume, the Jews had learned the doctrine of immortality from their Persian conquerors. Very few points in biblical exegesis are more certain than that David wrote the psalm, and that this text declares, what is elsewhere clearly intimated, a firm belief in a futurity of blessedness reserved for the true children of God.

NOTE on Psalm xvii. 3.

Some critics (Hupf., Ew., Moll,) render the first word in the second clause ("I am purposed," A.V.) "guilty thought in me." This completes the sentence, is grammatically tenable (Hupf. takes it as the infin. with suffix), and has the authority of LXX., ἀδικία, Vulg., "iniquitas," Targ., שחיתא, "corruption" (with an alternative, however, "cogitari malum"); Syr. "evil." This is probably the true reading and rendering.

PSALM XVIII.

David praiseth God for his manifold and marvellous blessings.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of *this song in the day *that* the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said,

* 2 Sam. 22.

I WILL love thee, O LORD, my strength.

Psalm XVIII.

This psalm is the longest, and in some points one of the most important, of those which are attributed to David in the inscriptions. It was composed after the complete subjugation of David's foreign enemies, when all traces of opposition from Saul's family had passed away, and, as critics generally agree (see Ew., Hitz.), for the express purpose of a public thanksgiving, and celebration of a series of victories. So much we gather from the inscription, which is repeated nearly verbatim in 2 S. xxii., and was probably taken from a contemporary chronicle. On the other hand, it appears to have been written before the great sin was committed which threw a dark shadow over the spirit of the king and the state of his kingdom. There is no allusion to domestic enemies, no indication of remorse for special guilt; all foes are subdued, and the Psalmist, confident in God's salvation, looks forward to a peaceful and glorious future for himself and his seed. These and other notices make it highly probable that it belongs to the period described in 2 S. vii.—ix, special references to which will be pointed out in the notes. The style of the psalm is such as befits the maturity of David's genius; it is at once remarkable for vigour and grace, full of archaic grandeur, and yet free from abrupt transitions and thoughts labouring for utterance, forcing, as it were, language into strange forms, which make some of the earlier psalms difficult to understand. (See some fine general remarks by Ewald, 'G. I.' III. p. 78.) The internal indications of authorship, and the external evidence, are so convincing, that with two exceptions (Lengerke and Olshausen, see Introd.) critics of all schools, none more earnestly than Ewald and Hitzig, accept it as the production of David; the one, indeed, by

2 The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, † my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower.

† Heb. *my rock.*

3 I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

4 [a] The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of † ungodly men made me afraid.

[a] Ps. 116. 3

† Heb. *Belial.*

5 The ‖ sorrows of hell compassed

‖ Or, *cords.*

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which the authenticity of other psalms may be tested. The whole spirit of the king, as head of the Theocracy, pervades the composition.

The psalm is not directly Messianic, applying as it does unquestionably to the person, acts and feelings of David, but typical bearings throughout are distinct. All events are idealized. The personal manifestation of God, the king's righteousness, his mission to the heathen, as their head, *v.* 43, and teacher, 49, point to God's anointed Son, in Whom the promises to David and his seed have an absolute fulfilment. Two meanings are not to be looked for, but the true and literal meaning, applicable to the type, is even more entirely applicable to the antitype.

The metrical system is peculiar. First five strophes, each of three verses, ending with the division at *v.* 15: then five strophes, each increasing in length; an arrangement probably determined by special circumstances, this being a processional hymn, but serving admirably to express the overflowing thankfulness of the great Psalmist's heart.

the servant of the LORD] This designation is often given to David, both in the psalms, (xix. 11, 13, xxxvi., as here, in the inscription, lxxxix, 3, 20,) and in the historical books; see 2 S. iii. 18, vii. 5, and vii. 19—29, where David uses it no less than eight times in one prayer. It marks an office, and is applied to prophets, and specially to persons, such as Moses, Joshua, and David, who severally were entrusted with God's work in critical epochs. The references given above shew that David would not hesitate to use it of himself, as expressing his consciousness of a special calling, and inward devotedness; in both respects it corresponds to the title constantly assumed by the apostles; see Rom. i. 1; Tit. i. 1; James i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1; Jude i. 1; Apoc. i. 1.

spake...the words of this song] Exactly the same formula is used in Deut. xxxi. 30. The reference is evidently intended to mark the peculiarly solemn character of the song. The Hebrew word denotes a hymn adapted for recitation, or singing with the accompaniment of the lyre. Compare Ex. xv. 1; Num. xxi. 17.

from the hand of Saul] The last and the chiefest of David's personal enemies; as such he is fitly mentioned in the inscription of a psalm of general thanksgiving, whether the inscription was written by David, or, as seems more probable, by the compiler of this portion of the psalter.

1. *I will love thee*] The Hebrew word denotes tender affection, and is elsewhere used of God's love to man, not of man's to God. It marks a high development of the spiritual instinct. This verse is omitted in 2 S. xxii.

2. *my rock*] The climax should be noted: the rock, or cliff, comes first as the place of refuge, then the fortress or **fastness**, as a place carefully fortified, then the personal deliverer, without whose intervention escape would have been impossible. The second half of the verse varies the expressions; "my strength" or **rock** (a different word from cliff), used of Horeb, Ex. xvii. 6, and of Jehovah, "the rock of salvation," in the Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 4, 15, 18, 30, 31 (see also note on 1 S. ii. 2), doubtless not without reference to the covenant ever present to the mind of "*the servant of the LORD*:" "my shield," first used in reference to Abram, Gen. xv. 1; see note on Ps. iii. 3: "the horn of my salvation," or "my horn of salvation," whether as symbol of strength,—so most commentators ancient and modern—or of height and dignity, the idea, as Dr Kay shews, more generally associated with the word in the psalms; see cxii. 9, and 1 S. ii. 10, and cf. Luke i. 69: lastly, "my high tower," or mountain castle, a figure which combines the ideas of perfect security and dignity. It is remarked (Del.) that we have in this verse seven appellations of Jehovah, the mystic number which in sacred things symbolizes perfection. Other epithets are added in 2 S. xxii., "my refuge, my saviour," apparently as explaining the meaning of the preceding figures, but regarded by Ewald as part of the original text. The words "in Whom I will trust" are the keynote struck by David in Pss. vii. and xi., probably the earliest of his psalms.

3. *I will call*] Or, "I call." David speaks of a general result of prayer, accompanied by a recognition of divine goodness, the object of devout praise.

4. *The sorrows of death compassed me*] Or, **the cords of death surrounded me.** The A.V. follows the LXX. and Vulg. (ὠδῖνες, dolores, thus, too, the Targ.); see also Acts ii. 24: and the Hebrew word occurs frequently in that sense; see Ges. s.v. But from the following verse it is clear that Death is here represented as a hunter: he surrounds

me about: the snares of death prevented me.

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

8 There went up a smoke [†]out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness *was* under his feet.

10 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.

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the field in which he seeks his prey with a hunting net. Aquila σχοινία. The reading in 2 S. xxii. 5 is different ("waves" A.V. or "breakers"), and is preferred by Ewald, as keeping to the same metaphor throughout the two clauses of the verse. So too the passage seems to have been read by Jonah, ii. 5, who undoubtedly had this and the two following verses in his mind.

floods of ungodly men] **floods of Belial**, the abstraction or personification of destructive wickedness. David sees himself, so to speak, in a plain surrounded by the hunter's lines, while all chance of escape is cut off by rushing torrents. The reader may compare Dante's fine description of "the headlong sweep" of a flood following a storm raised suddenly by the Evil One; 'Purg.' v. 112—129. See Rev. xii. 15.

5. This verse is not a repetition of the preceding. The cords which then surrounded the field are now drawn close (different verbs are used in the Hebrew), then Death stands in front in the act of casting the net. The same word "prevented," or "came in front of me," is used Ps. xvii. 13; where see note.

6. *distress*] **strait.**

out of his temple] This passage is conclusive as to the use of the word previous to the erection of Solomon's temple: a point of great importance in its bearings upon other psalms; see note on Ps. v. 7 and on xi. 4.

7—15. This passage, unsurpassed in sublimity and grandeur, describes a Theophany, or personal manifestation of the Lord. Natural phenomena supply the imagery, and are described with the minute and graphic accuracy characteristic of Hebrew poetry: earthquake followed by dense smoke, an outburst of flame, and showers of burning coals: then heavy clouds, thick darkness, a sound as of chariot-wheels sped by rushing winds; black thunderclouds rifted by sudden flashes, then the crash of thunder, Jehovah's voice; hailstones intermingled with frequent lightnings. In the brief account of David's victories, 2 S. viii., no mention is made of natural convulsions, but it is hard to resist the impression that the Psalmist describes a storm which he saw, and in which he realized the outward manifestation of God's Presence. It has been often remarked how many great battles have been fought amidst the strife of the elements, and that not merely in sacred history, as in Josh. x. 10, 11, at Beth-horon.

7. *shook and trembled*] Dr Kay expresses the paronomasia (gaash, raash) of the Hebrew by "quailed and quaked:" but the A.V. is accurate and true to nature, first the shock, then the trembling; thus Jerome, "commota est et contremuit." Our translators intentionally avoided such assonances as are common in most ancient languages. See note on x. 18.

8. *out of his nostrils*] Or, "in His anger;" cf. Deut. xxxii. 22: in irâ ejus. Compare, however, *v.* 15.

9. *He bowed the heavens*] So in the storm the clouds lower, descending close down upon the earth, resting on the hill-tops: see Ps. cxliv. 5.

10. *a cherub*] A collective noun meaning cherubim. The cherubim are represented as bearing the throne of God (cf. Ezek. i. 4—28, and note on Gen. iii. 24), it may be as symbolizing the agencies of nature. The rising storm speaks to the Seer of the approach of chariot-wheels (Ezek. i. 16, &c.) rolling over the vault of cloud. Mr Perowne says truly the word "cherub" is a "crux interpretum." It has no Semitic etymology: but the word (in Coptic Xereb, or Hereb) is of Egyptian origin, probably from "karabu" to shape, or hammer, sc. a figure, χαλκήλατος.

did fly] The Hebrew word in the second clause is different from that rendered "did fly" in the first. It is very rare, used in Deut. xxviii. 49 of the swoop of an eagle. In 2 S. xxii. 11, the change of a letter (r for d) gives "He was seen," probably an error of transcription. The variation of reading was older than the version of the LXX.; in Samuel, they have ὤφθη, but here ἐπετάσθη.

11. *darkness*] The Lord is represented as taking His temporary abode, pavilioned, so to

12 At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail *stones* and coals of fire.

13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail *stones* and coals of fire.

14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

15 Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of [1] many waters.

17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.

18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

19 He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

20 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

22 For all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

[1] Or, *great waters.*

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speak, amidst accumulated masses of cloud. There He sits unseen, but near, over the battle-field. Compare Deut. iv. 11; Ps. xcvii. 2.

12. *At the brightness*, &c.] The lightning breaks the clouds, they are rifted, dispersed in scattered masses, down rushes the hail (stored up in God's armoury against the day of battle, Job xxxviii. 22, 23), mingled with fiery flakes; cf. Ex. ix. 23. Another rendering expresses the sense more accurately, "Out of the brightness before Him there passed through His clouds hailstones," &c. Hupf.

13. The thunder follows, God's voice pronouncing judgment. The last clause is omitted in 2 S. and here by a few MSS. and the LXX.: but it is retained generally by critics, as describing the immediate recurrence, or uninterrupted continuance, of the storm.

Hail is rare in Palestine, but, when it falls, causes terrible destruction; see note on Josh. x. 11.

14. The effect of the storm. The enemy, too, recognize the indications of wrath: a sudden panic seizes them, and they are at once *discomfited;* see Ex. xiv. 24, where the same word is used.

15. *channels of waters*] The Hebrew properly denotes the **beds of torrents** flowing through a rocky district; cf. Job vi. 15, and note on Ps. xlii. 1. We may understand this passage to mean that the rocks were cleft, and the waters instantaneously swallowed up; such indeed appears to be a necessary inference from the parallel clause. The words used throughout this description recall Ex. xiv. and xv., a passage certainly present to David's mind. For this reason Ewald prefers the reading 2 S., which instead of "waters" has "sea."

16—19. David now relates in plain terms the results of the divine judgment, referring, however, to the figures previously employed.

16. The reference to the deliverance of Moses, the "servant of God," is clear. The word rendered "He drew me" occurs nowhere but in Ex. ii. 10; where it is used to explain the meaning of the name Moses. The note on that passage shews that it is Egyptian, the word naturally used by the princess, who sent and *took* the child. The *many waters* points back to *v.* 4.

17. *my strong enemy*] David probably goes back to the first deliverance from Saul, but the expression is generally taken collectively.

18. *prevented me*] See *v.* 5.

19. *a large place*] Sc. into open ground, not *compassed* by floods or nets, *vv.* 5, 6. See too note on iv. 1.

delighted in me] See note on xxii. 8, and cf. 2 S. xv. 26. The expression is thoroughly Davidic.

20—24. The moral cause of the interposition, which proves and rewards innocence. Although this passage might have been written after David's fall and recovery, it is far more appropriate to his previous condition. The assertions of righteousness, cleanness of hands (cf. xxiv. 4), &c., are condemned by some critics (see Bleek, 'Einl.' p. 625) as indicating pride and self-reliance, but see note on vii. 8.

21. *wickedly departed from my God*] David uses many other words in the penitential psalms to describe his own guilt, but never uses this, which implies wilful and persistent wickedness. The construction "from my God" is questioned; but it rests on good authority, LXX., and many late critics.

23 I was also upright [1] before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.

24 Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands [1] in his eyesight.

25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;

26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt [1] shew thyself froward.

27 For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.

28 For thou wilt light my [1] candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

29 For by thee I have [1] run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.

30 *As for* God, his way *is* perfect: [b] the word of the LORD is [1] tried: he *is* a buckler to all those that trust in him.

31 [c] For who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?

32 *It is* God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

33 He maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*, and setteth me upon my high places.

[1] Or, *lamp*.
[1] Or, *broken*.
[b] Ps. 12. 6. & 119. 140. Prov. 30. 5.
[1] Or, *refined*.
[c] Deut. 32. 31, 39. 1 Sam. 2. 2. Ps. 86. 8. Isai. 45. 5.

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23. *upright*] As Abram, Gen. xvii. 1.

before him] Rather as the marg., "with Him," in my relations to Him.

from mine iniquity] A very important statement in its bearing upon the religious consciousness of David. It recognizes an inward tendency to sin, nay, an inherent sinfulness, but he kept himself in guard against it. The rendering is strictly literal, and the sense thus elicited is preferable to that suggested by Delitzsch, "I kept myself from sin, that it might not be my sin," or by Hupf., "from a sin that I might have committed." Cf. Ps. li. 5, "I was shapen in iniquity." The reference to a special temptation, suggested by Dr Kay, as *e.g.* 2 S. xxiv. 3, is possible, but rather weakens the argument.

24. A repetition of *v.* 20, an emphatic declaration of integrity, concluding with an appeal to Him who seeth the inner man.

25—30. A general view of God's dealings with the just and the unjust.

25. *merciful*] Or, "gracious."

26. *froward*] Or, *with the perverse thou shewest thyself froward.* It is strange that our translators should have used the same word twice, when different words are given in the Hebrew. In dealing with the good, God shews His approval by manifesting attributes similar or identical in essence: in dealing with the wicked He exhibits attributes which are correlative, in just proportion to their acts (see Rom. i. 24—28): He suffers them to be ruined by their own perverseness. The rendering "shew thyself froward" but imperfectly expresses the Hebrew, derived from a root meaning "to twist;" "shew thyself tortuous" comes nearer; nor is the reference to "wrestling" to be rejected; it is a meaning which certainly belongs to the verb, in another and nearly allied form. The Lord so deals with the perverse as to bring them into inextricable perplexity and to overthrow them. Dr Kay refers to Lev. xxvi. 23, 24, where, however, a different word is used.

28. *my candle*] Or, **lamp**. The word is specially used of the golden candlestick in the tabernacle; but generally also as a symbol of life and prosperity; see Job xviii. 6, and xxix. 3; a passage which resembles this very closely, and may have been in the Psalmist's mind. David himself is called the light (*ner*, as in this passage) of Israel, 2 S. xxi. 17; cf. 1 K. xi. 36, xv. 4, and Ps cxxxii. 17.

29. *run through*] This rendering is probably correct (thus Syr., Hupf., Hitz.); the marg. is accepted by Ew., Perowne, Kay, and either is grammatically possible; but David seems rather to refer to the speed of his pursuit and onslaught. Aq. and Sym. δραμοῦμαι.

a troop] Specially used of light-armed troops sent to plunder an invaded country; *e.g.* thrice of the Amalekites who burnt Ziklag; see 1 S. xxx. 8, 15.

a wall] David may refer to the storming of Zion, an important epoch in his life, and a fitting climax in this passage; see 2 S. v. 6—9, and compare Joel ii. 7. The Hebrew word for "leaped" is used specially of the swift bounding of the hind, Song Sol. ii. 8; Isai. xxxv. 6.

30. *tried*] Or "refined;" see note on xii. 6; the figure occurs frequently.

31. *a rock*] The reference to Deut. xxxii. 4 (see note on *v.* 2) is here unmistakeable.

32. *maketh my way perfect*] With reference to *v.* 30, as His way is perfect. Cf. Matt. v. 48.

33. *hinds' feet*] See note on *v.* 29. Cf. Hab. iii. 19, which is evidently taken from this. Hitz. Ewald ('G. I.' III. p. 79) calls

34 He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

35 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and [‖] thy gentleness hath made me great.

36 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that [†] my feet did not slip.

37 I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

38 I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

39 For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast [†] subdued under me those that rose up against me.

40 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.

41 They cried, but *there was* none to save *them*: *even* unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

42 Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

43 Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; *and* thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

44 [†] As soon as they hear of me,

‖ Or, *with thy meekness thou hast multiplied me.*
† Heb. *mine ancles.*
† Heb. *caused to bow.*
† Heb. *At the hearing of the ear.*

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attention to the qualifications of David, as a born ruler over men: first of all endued with a sinewy frame, a point in those times of primary importance, created, so to speak, for warfare, capable of immense efforts and unexhausted by prolonged exertions: he notes also the point in which David differed from the heroes of classic antiquity, his ascription of this natural endowment to the special favour of Jehovah. See, however, 'Il.' I. 178.

my high places] My dominions with their fortresses, rocks and mountains. The "my" is emphatic; David waged a war of defence, not of invasion; but cf. Deut. xxxii. 13. The words, however, refer primarily to the hind, remarkable alike for speed and "surefootedness;" Tristram, 'N. H. B.' p. 100. Cf. Song Sol. ii. 17.

34. *so that*, &c.] Or, **so that my arms bend a bow of bronze**:" bronze, highly tempered and elastic, not steel, or brass, was used for bows by the Egyptians and Israelites. The rendering "steel" follows a Rabbinical tradition, Kimchi; but "prior æris erat quam ferri cognitus usus." Lucretius, V. 1285. The force and skill required to bend a hero's bow are spoken of by poets from Homer downwards. The rendering "bend" or "stretch" is well defended by Hupfeld, but the Hebrew form presents some difficulty.

35. *Thou hast also given me the shield*] This clause is omitted in 2 S. Thus Ajax holds his shield over the head of Teucer, while he kneels with bended bow.

thy gentleness] Or, *condescension;* lit. humility, the correlative quality in man: the term is not used elsewhere of God; but cf. Isai. lxiii. 9, and note on *v.* 1 of this psalm. The LXX., Syr., Sym., Theod. and Vulg., take the Hebrew word to mean "Thy chastisement;" but the A.V. has the support of nearly all modern critics. Thus too Aq., Chald. and Hebrew interpreters.

36. *Thou hast enlarged*] Or, made wide room for my steps, clearing away all hindrances: see Ps. xxxi. 8; Prov. iv. 12: for the converse see note on Job xviii. 7.

that my feet] **and my ancles do not slip**: the word denotes unsteadiness, a giving way owing to physical weakness.

39. *subdued*] **bowed down**; the same word is used Ps. xvii. 13, where see note.

40. *Thou hast also given me the necks*] *i.e.* caused them to turn back before me. Lit. "Thou hast given mine enemies to me (by their) neck:" the same phrase is used in Exod. xxiii. 27, where it is more correctly rendered "I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee."

41. This verse seems to refer to a victory over domestic enemies, not over the heathen, who would not call on the Lord: unless indeed it be assumed that a partial knowledge and dread of the Lord had penetrated the peoples bordering on Israel, and speaking cognate dialects. So far as knowledge is concerned, the fact that the *name* of Jehovah was familiar to the Moabites is proved by its occurrence on the now famous inscription of Mesha: after the final defeat of Moab that knowledge may have issued in fear of Him, Whose superiority to Chemosh was proved by their own test of might. Cf. Judg. xi. 24.

43. *the head of the heathen*] Or, "head of nations." David saw in his foreign conquests a pledge of the fulfilment of Messianic prophecies; see especially Ps. ii. 8.

44. *As soon as they hear*, &c.] The answer of an eastern to his sovereign's command, "to hear is to obey." Kay refers to 2 S. viii. 9, 10; Ps. xxii. 27; Isai. lv. 5.

they shall obey me: †the strangers shall ‖†submit themselves unto me.

45 The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.

46 The LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

47 *It is* God that †avengeth me, and ‖subdueth the people under me.

48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the †violent man.

49 [d] Therefore will I ‖give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.

50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

† Heb. *the sons of the stranger.* ‖ Or, *yield feigned obedience.* † Heb. *lie.* † Heb. *giveth avengements for me.* ‖ Or, *destroyeth.* † Heb. *man of violence.* [d] Rom. 15. ‖ Or, *confess.*

PSALM XIX.

1 *The creatures shew God's glory.* 7 *The word his grace.* 12 *David prayeth for grace.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

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submit] Or, **flatter me**, lit. lie to me, *i.e.* as in marg. yield feigned obedience, the obedience of fear: cf. Deut. xxxiii. 29; Ps. lxvi. 3, lxxxi. 15. Thus Ros., Hupf., Kay, &c. In the corresponding passage of 2 S. a word is used, slightly differing in form, but with the same meaning.

45. *be afraid*] The Hebrew word occurs only in this passage. It probably means, "will flee trembling." Ros., Ew., Hupf., &c. Cf. Mic. vii. 17.

46—50. The triumphant close of the hymn at once presents the leading thoughts of gratitude for deliverance, and firm trust in Jehovah, and predicts the fulfilment of all His promises.

46. *The LORD liveth*] Cf. Ps. xlii. 2, "the living God," and *v.* 8, "the God of my life." Ewald takes it as an archaism equivalent to "Blessed be God."

47. *avengeth me*] Or, "who giveth avengements to me," or "awardeth retributions to me:" cf. 2 S. iv. 9, 10; an important passage as bearing upon David's character, and his repudiation of private acts of vengeance. The reference to 2 S. x. 4, touching the provocation to the war of which this hymn celebrates the results, is of some value, but the statement is general; in all successes David saw retributive justice.

subdueth] The Hebrew word occurs twice only (see Ps. xlvii. 3) in this sense; but the rendering rests on good authority, and is accepted by critics. It has the special meaning of keeping in subjection, as a flock to the shepherd. Cf. Ps. ii. 9.

48. *the violent man*] The expression may be general; see note on *v.* 17; but, considering that the psalm specially commemorates deliverance from all enemies, there is no reason why this distinctive and accurate designation should not point to Saul, the chief of David's persecutors, and, as such, expressly named in the very ancient, if not contemporary, inscription.

49. St Paul, Rom. xv. 9, applies this to our Lord. David evidently speaks with a consciousness that his mission, as head of the Theocracy, and, as such, forerunner and type of Christ, was not confined to Israel: it involved the proclamation of God's might and goodness to the heathen, undoubtedly with a view to the fulfilment of the original promise to Abram, Gen. xii. 2, 3, and the extension of God's mercies to all nations. Cf. Ps. lxvi. 4, lxxii. 11.

50. The close of the hymn refers, as critics generally admit (Hitz., &c.), to the solemn declaration communicated through Nathan, 2 S. vii.: see especially *vv.* 12—16, 26—29.

David] This is the only passage in which David names himself; it may be with reference to the special promise through Nathan "to thy servant David," or because the psalm was intended for public recitation, reminding the whole nation of the grounds on which their allegiance to the house of David rested.

The question whether the text of the psalm is more ancient or more accurate in the book of Samuel or here has been much discussed. Both texts have internal proofs of independence and originality: in fact it is now admitted that neither could have been taken from the other: nor are the deviations generally such as could be accounted for by inaccurate transcription. The most natural and probable explanation is, that David towards the close of his reign prepared a revision for public recitation.

PSALM XIX.

This psalm, universally regarded as one of the profoundest and most affecting of David's compositions, is especially remarkable for the vivid contrast, and at the same time the inner harmony, which it recognizes between the results of natural and revealed religion. The heavens, as Bacon observes, declare the glory, but not the will of God: that is known only by His law, re-

[a] Gen. 1. 6.

THE [a] heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 *There is* no speech nor language, [I] † *where* their voice is not heard.

4 [b] [I] Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

I Or, *without their voice is heard.* † Heb. *without their voice heard.*

[b] Rom. x. 18.

I Or, *Their rule*, or, *direction.*

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vealed to man as the perfect expression of that will, for his conversion, instruction and guidance.

It would appear to belong to the same period of David's life as the preceding psalm, with which it has an intimate connection. At the close of that psalm (see *vv.* 43, 49) the king declares his mission to the heathen; in this he dwells first upon the preparation for such work by natural agencies, then upon the instruments by which it could be effected; in both speaking in accordance with our Lord and His Apostles (cf. Matt. v. 45, vi. 26—33: Acts xiv. 15—17, and xvii. 24—31); David, it may be for this reason, calls himself a servant of God, *vv.* 11, 13. The psalm has other indications of belonging to the king's sunny and hopeful manhood. As in other early psalms (see note on xviii. 23), he has the consciousness of inherent and secret sinfulness, *v.* 12, and of the danger of falling into wilful sin, but it is clear that he has not committed the great transgression, from which he prays to be preserved.

There is a marked difference between the style of the two portions of the psalm. The former has fuller and more varied cadences, the latter is more pointed and compact; but there is, notwithstanding, a pervading harmony, recognized by severe critics. In both the language is at once forcible and sweet, with frequent archaisms and vivid imagery; and it has been noted that in both there is a fundamental identity of structure, each consisting of fourteen clauses, arranged in six or eight strophes of nearly equal length. The former portion, as might be expected, is richer in imagery, the naturalistic element of poetry; the latter, in deep and holy feelings, movements of a heart stirred to its depths by God's law.

1. *declare*] Or, "recount."

God] Hebrew, "El;" a name which denotes the majesty and power of God. It is the only name which occurs in the first part of this psalm, and here once only, in studied antithesis to the name Jehovah, which is used, exclusively, seven times in the second part. David celebrates the *glory* of El, the God of nature, the *law* of Jehovah, the God of the Covenant. Ex. vi. 3.

sheweth] Or, **proclaimeth.**

2. *uttereth speech*] Lit. "poureth forth speech." Each day overflows with utterances full of meaning, which it transmits to its successor. The word is used specially of religious and prophetic utterances, as in Ps. lxxviii. 2; Prov. i. 23, where A.V. has "pour out."

sheweth knowledge] The Hebrew word occurs elsewhere only in the book of Job, xv. 17, xxxvi. 2. It means properly "quickeneth," "keepeth alive;" that is, gives a living quickening knowledge, as though contemplation of the starry firmament awakened deeper, more spiritual thoughts than the brightness of day. Thus, too, in the first clause, "speech" denotes an outward communication; "knowledge," in the second clause, the inward apprehension. Bishop Horne remarks of day and night thus occupied, they are "like two parts of a choir, chanting forth alternately the praises of God."

3. *There is no speech*, &c.] This translation gives a clear sense, well adapted to the context; it is supported by the ancient versions, and some critics (Vaihinger), and is grammatically defensible. Other renderings are proposed, of which the two most generally accepted are, (1) "That is no speech, no words, whose sound is not heard," *i.e.* the speech and words which tell of God's glory are heard by all (thus Vitringa, Hitz., Moll). (2) "There is no speech, there are no words, all inaudible is their voice;" thus our Psalter, Hupf., Ew., Perowne, Kay. The rendering is literal and grammatical, but it introduces a thought which is scarcely in accordance with the preceding and following verses.

4. *Their line*] The translation is exact, but the meaning is disputed. The word "line" has in Hebrew the special sense of a boundary line marking the extent of dominion; it is thus understood in this passage by Hupfeld and some other critics, and apparently by our translators. The more general, and the oldest, interpretation is "sound," specially sound produced by harp-strings, or, as Dr Kay holds, "the regulative string." The sense thus elicited suits the context, but it is not supported by Hebrew usage. In all other passages line (kav) means either a measuring line, or a rule (sc. of conduct), a precept or decree; nor would the last sense be unsuitable; the decree of the heavens goes forth, proclaiming the glory of God, and the duty of worshipping Him. See Note below.

5 Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6 His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The [1] law of the LORD *is* perfect, [1] converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* [†] true *and* righteous altogether.

[1] Or, *doctrine.* [1] Or, *restoring.* [†] Heb. *truth.*

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their words] The Hebrew again recalls the book of Job, in which the word here used occurs frequently (see Ges. 'Th.' s. v.); a fact of some moment, as bearing upon the antiquity of this psalm, and of that book; and as indicating the influence of Job upon David's mind, an influence perhaps making itself specially felt in dealing with the question of natural religion.

5. *bridegroom*] The symbol of youthful vigour and happiness, or of the beginning of a new life; adopted by our Lord, though with special reference to the bride.

out of his chamber] Joel ii. 16.

as a strong man] The epithet is applied to the sun in Judg. v. 31. Elsewhere to God, El, of Whom the sun is a type; Isai. ix. 6, El Gibbor, "the mighty God."

6. *going forth*] Cf. Mic. v. 2. The imagery of this verse should not be pressed as presenting a theory of the earth's form. The poet describes simply what he observes.

nothing hid] The heat of the sun, which is the condition of physical life, reaches as far as the teaching of the heavens; they instruct all, he quickens all. Hence the fitness of the symbol, and of the application to the Lord Christ and His apostles, Rom. x. 18.

The connection between the two parts of this psalm is questioned, but the analogy between the order and light of the universe and God's moral law lies very deep. It is recognized by Greek philosophy, by the very word κόσμος; and by Confucius, see the 12th chap. §§ 3 and 4 of the 'Tchung Yung.' It seems strange that this most beautiful of all expressions of so great a thought should be ignored by a Christian thinker.

7. The praise of God's law now follows in a rapid flow of short clauses, each with *a double beat* (Del.), expressing the warm emotion of the Psalmist's heart. The first word involves all that can be said, the law is perfect, a complete revelation of God's will; in St Paul's words, "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good," Rom. vii. 12; a passage of extreme importance, connected as it is with his view of the inefficacy of the law to control the will, even while the sinner's reason consents to it as good, *v.* 16.

converting] Or, as in marg., **restoring**, lit. bringing it back, sc. from ignorance and sin; the word involves the idea of deliverance and refreshment. The converting efficacy depends, of course, upon its application to the heart by the Spirit, a point which David may have discerned but imperfectly, and was not commissioned to declare.

the testimony] Used specially of the Decalogue; see Exod. xxv. 16.

the simple] The word is used in its original and natural sense; it denotes one whose consciousness or reason is as yet undeveloped: the "testimony" supplies what is needful; if rejected, it leaves the "simple" self-condemned, and then "simple" becomes, like other names for folly in Hebrew, synonymous with "sinful."

8. *enlightening the eyes*] See note on xiii. 3; and compare the effect of the honey juice upon the eyes of Jonathan, 1 S. xiv. 27. The expression includes the gift of comfort and joy as well as knowledge.

9. *The fear of the LORD*] Godly fear, the fear of reverence inseparable from love, "which never faileth."

the judgments] The order in which the six words describing God's law occur should be observed. 1. The law, of which the fundamental principle is instruction (Heb. *thorah*, from *yarah*, teach). 2. The testimony, *i.e.* warning; God's appeal to the conscience, bearing witness to the law. 3. Statutes, or, more exactly, visitations, securing obedience, or checking infringements of the law. 4. Commandments, *i.e.* precepts, better understood as man advances under the teaching of the law. 5. The fear of God, the settled habit of the soul informed by the law. 6. The judgments, the final awards of the Giver of the law. The omission of "*the Word*" is noticeable. David may have regarded it as synonymous with "the law;" and in this passage his object is specially to set forth the beauty of "the law" as the rule of life, and the expression of God's will.

e Ps. 119. 72, 127. Prov. 8. 19. *d* Ps. 119. 103. † Heb. *the dropping of honey-combs.*

10 More to be desired *are they* than gold, *e*yea, than much fine gold: *d*sweeter also than honey and † the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

12 Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults.*

13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins;* let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from ‖ the great transgression.

‖ Or, *much*

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, † my strength, and my redeemer.

† Heb. *my rock.*

10, 11. These verses describe the emotions felt, and the effects experienced, by God's servant. The law excites the strongest desires and satisfies them completely. The great reward is *in keeping* it, rather than in the blessing which follows.

10. *honeycomb*] Or, "the droppings of the honeycomb;" the same word is used 1 S. xiv. 27.

12. *Who can understand his errors?*] The strain here changes suddenly; the Psalmist applies the law to himself. As for errors, sins of ignorance, or infirmity, who can discern them? "He knows nothing by himself (is not conscious of special sin), yet is he not thereby justified" (1 Cor. iv. 4); secret sins, or "hidden sins," need cleansing, *i.e.* both pardon and expiation.

cleanse] Make or hold me guiltless.

13. *presumptuous sins*] The Hebrew word so rendered corresponds in meaning to the presumptuous sins, which in Num. xv. 30 are declared to be unpardonable; in contradistinction from sins of ignorance. The difference is not in the act, but in the intention. The form of the word is peculiar, but occurs six times in the cxixth Ps., lit. "presumptuous ones:" whether, as if sins were realized as personal enemies (Kay), or more probably with reference to their manifold and ever-varying forms. David's sins more than once reached, and once overpassed, the limitary line between error and presumption, but they were not repeated when brought home thoroughly to his conscience.

the great transgression] Or, "and guiltless from great transgression:" the word "great" is emphatic, guilt matured, fully developed. May not this earnest, touching prayer indicate an inward consciousness of liability to the special temptation of the king?

14. The prayer is general, but has doubtless a special reference to the psalm, as expressing the result of devout meditation upon God's works and Jehovah's law.

my strength] **my rock**, as in Ps. xviii. 2.

my redeemer] The expression occurs first Gen. xlviii. 16, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil." When applied to God it is always in the sense of a deliverer, who maintains the cause of His own people, and ransoms, or, more generally, saves them. The use of the word in legal transactions is secondary. See Note on Job xix. 25.

NOTE on PSALM XIX. 4.

קו from קוה, as in Arab., to twist, or bind, hence, "to be strong," has the radical meaning of a line, or "bond," that which fastens. In Isai. xxvii i. 10 it is coupled with צו, a precept, and means, probably, a decree, or binding law: in Ezek. xlvii. 3 and 2 K. xxi. 13, a measuring line: in Isai. xviii. 2 it may mean "strength;" thus Ges. and Knobel: but "decree" is more satisfactory, "a nation of decree upon decree;" sc. of fixed rules, settled forms. It seems a bold process, scarcely justified by Hebrew usage, to take קו first as a measuring line, then simply as a cord, then as a harp-string (the regulator, Dr Kay), then as the sound produced by the harp-string (though for the last change the analogy of τόνος from τείνω might be adduced). "Decree," on the contrary, adheres to the radical meaning and use of the word, and yields an apt and forcible sense.

PSALM XX.

1 *The church blesseth the king in his exploits.* 7 *Her confidence in God's succour.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THE LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob † defend thee;

† Heb. *set thee on an high place.*

2 Send † thee help from the sanc-

† Heb. *thy help*

PSALM XX.

This psalm and the following one are closely connected. This contains the supplications of the people on behalf of the king, going forth on a martial expedition; the other expresses their joy at his triumph. The special notices, *vv.* 7, 8, seem to point

tuary, and †strengthen thee out of Zion;

3 Remember all thy offerings, and †accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

4 Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

6 Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him †from his holy heaven †with the saving strength of his right hand.

7 Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

9 Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

† or, *fat.*

† Heb. *from the heaven of his holiness.*

† Heb. *by the strength of the salvation of his right hand.*

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to the war with the Syrians (see 2 S. x. 17—19). but are suitable to any of the foreign wars which occupied so large a portion of David's reign. Both psalms are attributed to David in the inscriptions, nor is there any good reason to question the assertion. David, as the representative of the nation and "servant of the Lord," was quite justified in putting such petitions into the mouths of the people. Both psalms were evidently composed for public and liturgical recitation; and were probably sung by the priests and the people, or its representatives, in the court, or at the gate of the tabernacle. Ewald, who thinks that this psalm may have been composed in Asa's reign, admits that the language, the vivid imagery, simple grandeur of style, and warm expressions of trust in the Lord, not surpassed in any temple-hymn, point to the time of David.

1. *trouble*] Literally "strait."

defend thee] The marginal rendering is more accurate; the people pray not merely for the safety, but for the triumph of their king, that he may be set on high, raised over his enemies.

2. *help*] **Thy help** in the margin is correct and forcible: the help on which the king might depend, pledged to him by gracious promises. Cf. Ps. xxii. 1 and 1 K. viii. 30.

sanctuary] The word suits the reign of David, when the sanctuary was fixed in Jerusalem, but the temple was not yet built. This psalm was probably recited by the priests and people immediately after the offering of sacrifices.

3. *Remember*] The word has a special reference to the *mincha* which the priest burnt upon the altar, as a *memorial*, an appeal to God to remember the giver. See notes on Lev. ii. 1, 2; Acts x. 4.

thy offerings] The king offered sacrifices in person, especially on great occasions, such as the beginning of a war, or before a battle. There is no interference with the proper functions of the priesthood in this; animals might be offered and sacrificed by the heads of families. The offerings consisted both of the mincha, fine flour with oil and frankincense, and whole burnt-offerings, representing the gratitude and absolute devotion of the worshippers.

accept] Or, "approve," lit. as in the marg. "make fat." The people pray that God may regard the offerings as fat, *i.e.* befitting the occasion, the best that the king could present: compare Mal. i. 8.

5. This verse, which consists of three clauses, completes the first division of the psalm.

rejoice] Or, "shout;" the word expresses the jubilant shout of a host assured of victory.

6. *Now know I*] These words are either spoken by the king in person, or by the High-priest representing the nation.

7. *chariots*] The prohibition against keeping numerous war-horses was observed by David, who carried on his campaigns with infantry: thus shewing at once obedience to the law, and a just appreciation of the wisdom of the injunction. In a struggle with nations formidable for their chariotry (see especially 2 S. viii. 4, x. 18), the best and surest defence was a well-trained army of foot-soldiers. David's armies consisted of the same materials and used the same weapons which of old won so many great victories for England. Ewald has good observations on this point, 'Gesch.' III. p. 186. There may be a reference to the fact stated 2 S. x. 18, "David slew *the men of* 700 chariots of the Syrians, and 40,000 horsemen;" where see note.

8. The verse represents the anticipated result as already achieved; the future victory is realized by faith. In fact the ambiguity of Hebrew expression for past and future time, which sometimes occasions difficulty in the interpretation, represents the inward state of the speaker, to whom the past and future have the vividness and reality of the present.

9. *let the king*] Delitzsch observes that this designation of Jehovah, put into the mouth of the people while praying for their king, is favourable to the authorship by David. The argument is not conclusive, but would have considerable weight if the construction could

PSALM XXI.

1 *A thanksgiving for victory.* 7 *Confidence of further success.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THE king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!

2 Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

3 For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

4 He asked life of thee, *and* thou gavest *it* him, *even* length of days for ever and ever.

5 His glory *is* great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

6 For thou hast †made him most blessed for ever: thou hast †made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

† Heb. *set him to be blessings.*
† Heb. *gladded him with joy.*

7 For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.

8 Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

9 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

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be relied upon. It is however probable that the true meaning is "Jehovah save the king, may He answer us when we call." Thus Hupf., Ew., and most modern commentators, following the LXX. and Vulg. The A.V. has the Hebrew punctuation, the Targ., Jerome, and Syr. in its favour, and is defended by Del., and Dr Kay.

This psalm has a genuine Messianic character, if not as directly referring to the future King of Israel, yet as idealizing the anointed representative of the Theocracy.

PSALM XXI.

The Messianic character, noted in the preceding psalm, is brought out far more distinctly in this, which although doubtless suggested by the fulfilment of the hopes expressed in that, and directly applicable to special circumstances in the Ammonitish and Syrian campaign, goes far beyond the occasion, and describes aspirations and convictions which could only be realized in the ideal head of the Theocracy. This was felt so strongly by the Rabbins, that one of the ablest, Rashi, says, "This was interpreted of the King Messiah by our ancient teachers, but in order to meet the schismatics (*i.e.* Christians) it is better to understand it of David himself." The structure of the psalm befits a pæan: a short strophe, two verses with Selah; two longer strophes, each of five verses, and an ejaculatory close.

1. *The king*] The Targum renders this "The King-Messiah."

2. *desire*] A distinct allusion to the wishes expressed in Ps. xx. 4.

3. *preventest*] The word faithfully expresses the feeling that the gifts are of God's free favour and grace.

a crown] This was literally done, after the close of the Ammonitish war, when David took the king's golden crown, and it was set on David's head, 2 S. xii. 30; but there may be a reference to Ps. viii. 5, and Bishop Wordsworth points out a connection with Rev. vi. 2; see the next note.

4. This verse may be interpreted as simply expressing exaggerated feelings of loyalty towards the victorious king, but it is more natural to regard it as one of the many indications that the ideal King, the Messiah, whom David represented, was present to the Psalmist's mind; suggesting an expression which otherwise could hardly be justified, unless indeed it referred to a future life.

6. *blessed*] Rather, as in the margin, "blessings;" *i.e.* a source or realization of blessings, an allusion to Gen. xii. 2; cf. Eph. i. 3.

with thy countenance] Not merely by displaying goodness and favour, but by admission to personal intercourse and communion.

8. The following verses are addressed by the people, or by the High-priest, to the king: the victory already won is to the nation an assurance of conquest over all enemies.

9. *a fiery oven*] This might be explained as a reference to the conquest of Rabbah, which was decided by the personal appearance of the king; the Ammonites were then exterminated, part being made to pass through the brick-kiln: 2 S. xii. 31. If so, it would be a remarkable instance of the blending of sincere and lofty devotion with fierce national feelings, explicable, though not justified, by the cruel usages of all ancient warfare. It is, however, more probably a general denunciation of destruction to the enemies of the Lord.

10 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, *which* they are not able *to perform*.

12 Therefore ‖shalt thou make them turn their †back, *when* thou shalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy strings against the face of them.

‖ Or, *thou shalt set them as a butt.* † Heb. *shoulder.*

13 Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: *so* will we sing and praise thy power.

PSALM XXII.

1 *David complaineth in great discouragement.* 9 *He prayeth in great distress.* 23 *He praiseth God.*

To the chief Musician upon ‖Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, *the hind of the morning.*

MY [a] God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art*

[a] Matt. 27. 46. Mark 15. 34.

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12. *turn their back*] Lit. "the shoulder:" a common expression for putting to flight; cf. xviii. 40. The imagery is Davidic; see note on Ps. iii. 6.

PSALM XXII.

This psalm has been always inexpressibly dear to the Church. No psalm sets forth so completely the combination of suffering and righteousness, of utter prostration and internal sense of union with God, of grief amounting to despondency and certainty of God's future manifestation of Himself, His kingdom, and His righteousness. We are assured of its prophetical character by distinct statements in the New Testament; by references in all the Evangelists; by the express notices of Matt. xxvii. 35, and John xix. 24; by the ascription of one saying to Christ in Heb. ii. 12; above all, by our Lord's own adoption of the first words on the cross; see Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34. In fact, all the circumstances of the crucifixion are described with a minuteness and accuracy which critics are all but unanimous in recognizing, (thus even Hupf. notices "the certainly most striking coincidence of details with the history of the Passion,") while the future triumphs of the Church, extending to all nations, are depicted with equal completeness.

It is attributed to David: nor is there anything in the language or tone of thought which indicates a later origin. It abounds indeed in expressions which occur frequently, or exclusively, in psalms generally admitted to have been composed by David (see reff. on *vv.* 3, 11, 16, 20, 26). To what period of his life it should be assigned may be open to question; the development of Messianic anticipations in the latter portion (27—31, compare xviii. 43—50) points, perhaps, as Moll assumes, to the full maturity of manhood; but the figures, under which the enemies and the sufferings of the Psalmist are represented, would seem to be suggested by the circumstances of his flight from Saul (see *vv.* 12, 13, 16—21). And this impression is confirmed by the fact that in no part of this psalm are there any signs of the consciousness of great transgression, such as occur in penitential psalms of the king's later years. But although the imagery, as in the case of all the prophets, may have been suggested by the personal experience of the writer, it is certain that the principal traits do not apply to David. They set before us an individual who is an object of reviling and scorn (6—8), without a helper (11), surrounded by enemies who overmaster him (16, 20, 21), and part his garments among them: whose bones are racked, whose heart is broken, who is brought into the dust of death (14, 15). David was at no time without a helper; at the court of Saul he had Jonathan; in his banishment he was surrounded by faithful friends; the Gibborim were with him in his flight from Absalom: far from being despised by the people, their love and admiration were the causes of his persecution. Nor can any other individual in the sacred history be pointed out, to whom these circumstances in their combination are applicable. From first to last they are true of the Man of Sorrows, and of Him alone.

The only explanation which meets and satisfies all the conditions of a sound exegesis, that which has been held fast by the Church in all times, and has a sure foundation in Holy Scripture, is that the Psalmist was moved by the Spirit of Christ, so that, whether consciously or unconsciously, he recorded his afflictions, and expressed his hopes, in language which found its perfect fulfilment in the Messiah, of Whom David undoubtedly was, and knew himself to be, one of the very chiefest types. This view indeed is not peculiar to the Christian Church: it is found in early Rabbinical writers, some of whom interpret the inscription "the hind of the dawn" as the name of the Shechinah, and symbol of the redemption by Christ, while others declare that "the whole life of David was a typical representation of the Messiah:" thus the 'Yalkut Khadash;' see Wünsche, 'Die Leiden des Messias,' p. 87.

Those critics who refuse to accept David as the author are influenced solely by the difficulty of reconciling the description with any events in the life of the king. All admit the beauty and power of the language, which Ewald declares truly to be unsurpassable.

thou so far †from helping me, *and from* the words of my roaring?

† Heb. *from my salvation.*

2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in

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They differ altogether, as might be expected, as to the date to which it should be assigned. Some, even Perowne, follow Kimchi, the subtle and unscrupulous opponent of Messianic interpretations pointing to our Lord, and hold that it was written by some unknown exile during the Babylonish captivity. But Ewald shews (from *vv.* 4, 27) that it must have been composed when the temple, or tabernacle, was yet standing. Hitzig attributes it to Jeremiah on grounds which no other critic considers satisfactory. Maurer observes justly that the author must have been a man of wealth and high station, "qui magna auctoritate valeret."

The psalm has three distinct parts. The first (1—11) describes the deep anguish of the sufferer apparently forsaken by God, and despised by man, alternating with strong expressions of trust in God's holiness and love. In the second (12—21), the circumstances which cause the anguish are vividly portrayed, but the description is blended with earnest and devout supplication. In the third part (22—31), the strain changes suddenly, the psalm calls on all to join in praising God for an accomplished deliverance, and announces the extension of God's kingdom to all kindreds of the earth.

The metrical system is regular, six strophes each of five verses, with one ejaculatory verse, the 11th, separating the second from the third strophe.

Aijeleth Shahar] Or, *ayyeleth hash-shakhar*, correctly rendered in the marg. "hind of the morning." The words either designate a time for the guidance of the precentor, or, more probably, as Hengstenberg shews, they indicate the subject-matter of the poem. It is a figure under which the Psalmist might naturally represent the character and the sufferings of the person who is set before us. The grace and beauty of the hind, and its love of solitary and lofty places, are frequently noticed in the Bible (*e. g.* Gen. xlix. 21; Prov. v. 19; Song Sol. ii. 8, 9, viii. 14), and suggest similes to portray the character of David himself in Ps. xviii. 33: the Psalmist (xlii. 1) compares the longing for God to the panting of the hart after the water-brooks. Not less important are the notices in which David (2 S. i. 19) compares the death of Jonathan to that of a roe (צבי A.V. "beauty;" see Tristram 'Nat. Hist. B.' p. 127); and escape from danger is represented as the flight of a roe from the hunter, Prov. vi. 5. A similar metaphor is probably used in the title of the 56th psalm, and accords well with the style of David, whose compositions abound in symbols drawn from the animal world, in none more frequent or more striking than in this psalm. The epithet "of the morning" may possibly refer to the flight of the hind from the hunters in early dawn; or, as in many other passages, morning may symbolize the deliverance from persecution; cf. Isai. lviii. 8; Hos. vi. 3; 2 S. xxiii. 4; but in eastern poetry the horns of the roe, or of the gazelle, are used as a metaphor for the rays of the rising sun; an application which may have been in the mind of the Psalmist. It is obvious that, while each and all of these figures are suitable to the character and position of David, they apply in a far deeper and more spiritual sense to Him of whom David was a type.

1. *why hast thou forsaken me?*] In the person of David this would be an expression not of despair, but at once of amazement and of longing. He knows that God is truly *his* God; the forsaking therefore can but have a loving motive, to be explained ere the end come. In the person of Christ it directs attention to the cause of the infliction. The words "look upon me" in our Psalter are taken from the Vulgate, which follows the LXX.; they are probably a gloss, but shew a true appreciation of the Psalmist's longing after God. It is observable that the citation of this passage by our Saviour (see reff.) agrees with the Targum so far as regards the verb *sabacthani*, but follows the Hebrew in the word *lama*, for which the Targ. has *metul ma*, with the same meaning. From this it may, perhaps, be inferred that the Chaldee paraphrase in our Lord's time resembled, but was not identical with, that in our Polyglott.

from helping me] Rather, as in marg., **from my salvation.** To the godly man the presence or manifestation of God is identical with salvation. The word "my" is emphatic; the salvation which is mine by promise or covenant; cf. Ps. xx. 2, marg.

and from] These words are not in the original; they may express the true sense; but the ellipsis is unusual, and if they are omitted the meaning will be "far from my salvation are the words of my roaring." This follows the old Greek versions (LXX., Aq., Sym., Theod.; see Field, 'Hexapla' in loc.) and the Vulg.: it is defended by Delitzsch and Dr Kay. The construction, however, is difficult, and Hupfeld divides the clauses thus, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? *Such are* the words of my roaring."

roaring] A very strong word, used properly of the roar of the lion: it denotes the loud and bitter outcry of one in the extremity of suffering; thus Ps. xxxii. 3; Job iii. 24. St Matthew, xxvii. 46, has the Greek word which corresponds to it most nearly, ἀνεβόησε.

the night season, and †am not silent.

† Heb. *there is no silence to me.*

3 But thou *art* holy, *O thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

6 But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

7 [b] All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they †shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,

8 [c] † He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, ‖ seeing he delighted in him.

9 But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb: thou ‖ didst make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

10 I was cast upon thee from the

[b] Matt. 27. 39.
† Heb. *open.*
[c] Matt. 27. 43.
† Heb. *He rolled himself on the LORD.*
‖ Or, *if he delight in him*
‖ Or, *keptest me in safety.*

2. *hearest not*] **answerest not**; sc. by helping me.

am not silent] Or, "there is no silence, or cessation, for me." The ceaseless moaning wins no relief; cf. Jer. xiv. 17.

3. *thou art holy*] The holiness of God is a pledge of deliverance to the godly: a point of importance here, as in the highest sense applicable to Him who alone among the sons of men is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," Heb. vii. 26. See also Luke xxiii. 4. The LXX. appear to have had a different reading, "in the sanctuary." Thus, too, Sym., ἐν ἁγίοις; see Field, 'Hexapla.'

inhabitest, &c.] Or, "dwellest among." God is thus represented as enthroned in His sanctuary, where the praises and adorations of His worshippers, symbolized by the streams of incense, rise continually before Him. The word "inhabitest" refers to the throne, of which the cherubim, whose forms were on the mercy seat, are the mystic supporters; see note on xviii. 10. The reference to the sanctuary as not only existing, but attended by crowds of worshippers, is recognized by Ewald and Hupfeld; see introductory remarks. The appeal expresses with infinite tenderness and delicacy the thought that, since God is ever receiving the prayers of His people, He will surely answer them in the person of their representative: a thought enlarged upon in the following verses.

6. *a worm*] Cf. Job xxv. 6; Isai. xli. 24, marg.: as in this latter passage the word denotes utter helplessness and humiliation, but not personal guilt, of which there is no trace in this Messianic psalm. The general resemblance between this passage and the prophecies of Isaiah, in which the sufferings and humiliation of Christ are most distinctly depicted, is of extreme importance in determining the application.

a reproach of men] Compare Ps. lxix. 9, applied to our Lord by St Paul, Rom. xv. 3.

despised of the people] Cf. Isai. xlix. 7, liii. 3. This could only be applied in a very secondary sense to David. Saul's fury was caused by the directly opposite feelings on the part of the people.

7. *All they that see me*] Compare the words in this verse with those used by the Evangelists. "All they that see me laugh me to scorn,"—Luke xxiii. 35, "the people stood beholding" (θεωρῶν, here the LXX. has θεωροῦντες): and again "derided," where the Greek has ἐξεμυκτήρισαν, the word here used by the LXX. "They shake the head," LXX. ἐκίνησαν κεφαλήν: Matt. xxvii. 39; Mark xv. 29; κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν.

8. *He trusted on the LORD*] The adoption of these words by the enemies of our Lord is testified by St Matthew; see marg. ref. It is evident that they quoted from the LXX. version, without distinctly remembering the context. Our translation expresses the true meaning, but the construction of the Hebrew is somewhat difficult: probably the exact rendering is "trust in the LORD; let Him deliver him." The words either are spoken tauntingly by the persecutors, or refer to the habitual expression of trust now cast in the teeth of the sufferer. (גֹּל is now generally admitted to be the imperative, as in other passages where this form occurs. The expression is elliptical, lit. roll, *i.e.* thy way, or thy cares.)

seeing] This is preferable to the marg. The enemies say with bitter irony "for He delighteth in him." The citation in St Matthew "if He will have him" (εἰ θέλει αὐτόν) corresponds nearly to the LXX. (ὅτι θέλει αὐτόν), "for He will have him." It should be observed that the Hebrew (חָפֵץ בּוֹ), "He delighted in him," is exactly equivalent to ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, "in whom I am well-pleased" (see Matt. iii. 17), and is rendered by that word in four passages of the LXX. (see Tromm. 'Conc.' s.v.). This points directly to the "beloved Son."

9. *didst make me hope*] Or, "didst keep me trustful." The Psalmist recalls the sweet trustfulness of infancy, which he attributes to the direct influence of God, and longs for the same sense of security in his present troubles.

womb: thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

11 Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* [†] none to help.

12 Many bulls have compassed me: strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

13 They [†] gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are [1] out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: [d] they pierced my hands and my feet.

† Heb. *not a helper.*

† Heb. *opened their mouths against me.*

1 Or, *sundred.*

d Matt. 27. 35. Mark 15. 24. Luke 23. 33. John 19. 23, 37.

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10. *I was cast upon thee*] A remarkable expression, as though the child depended wholly and exclusively on God's love for protection. To the Hebrew all agencies are instrumental; the father's care, the mother's tenderness, are referred to God as their source. The expression corresponds to that rendered "trusted" in *v.* 8; see also lv. 22, where the same word is used.

thou art my God] *i.e.* Thou hast shewn Thyself to be my God, by constant care and love from my birth. Cf. Isai. xlvi. 3. Compare also the description of holy and trustful childhood in Luke ii. 22, 40, 49, 52.

11. *Be not far from me*] This refers to *v.* 1, "far from helping me:" note too the antithesis, Be not far, for trouble is near.

for there is none to help] True in its full sense of Christ, when "all forsook Him and fled," and of Him only. David had most powerful helpers in all his troubles; see Introduction.

12. The characteristics of the enemies, who are the agents of this great affliction, are strength, fierceness, and baseness, represented under the figures of bulls, lions and dogs; to which the Psalmist recurs again, *vv.* 20, 21, where he recapitulates his trials.

Many bulls have compassed me] Dr Tristram ('Nat. Hist. B.' p. 71) observes that "bulls and buffaloes are very numerous in the southern wilderness of Judæa," and adds that "they are in the habit of gathering in a circle round any novel or unaccustomed object, and may be easily instigated into charging with their horns;" a vivid portraiture of the rabble who were instigated to clamour for the death of Jesus. Matt. xxvii. 20.

Bashan] The district of Batanæa, to which the name Bashan was restricted at a later period, is a basaltic table-land to the north of the river Yarmuk, but the term here includes the rich pasture-land of Gilead, which formed part of the ancient kingdom of Bashan, and was famous for the size and beauty of its bulls, and also for their ferocity; frequently taken as symbols of the luxurious and ungodly rulers of Israel. Cf. Deut. xxxii. 14, 15; Ezek. xxxix. 18; Amos iv. 1. The characteristics thus presented are strength, pride, and ungodliness.

13. *They gaped upon me with their mouths*] Or, **they opened their mouths upon me.** The figure changes. As the foes come nearer the Psalmist sees in them lions, with open jaws, roaring as when about to rend their prey. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 23, περισσῶς ἔκραζον.

14. This verse and the two following verses contrast the exhaustion and the powerlessness of the speaker with the ferocity of his enemies. Each word recalls a distinct feature in our Lord's sufferings: "poured out like water," as when He sank fainting, unable to bear the cross (Matt. xxvii. 32), or when He shed His blood upon it; the bones racked, all but dislocated by the strain of the suspended body: the heart melted, so to speak, sending out all its blood in one stream mingled with water—according to physiologists the immediate cause of that death by crucifixion: the strength dried up, the body parched and agonized by thirst, the last and most terrible torment of the crucified, that which alone wrung an expression referring to physical pain from our Saviour, that *this* scripture might be fulfilled, see John xix. 28; the tongue cleaving to the jaws, yet forced, under the control of the mighty will, to utter the seven great words recorded by the evangelists: the body brought to the dust of death, laid, that is, in the grave (see critical Note on Job xix. and here on *v.* 29), though not to see corruption. Such cannot possibly have been the form in which David realized his own sufferings, sufficient though they were to make him a sympathizing exponent of the Spirit, which spoke by him to the Church.

16. *For dogs have compassed me*] The images become more distinct. The speaker sees himself in the death-hour, surrounded by dogs; representing the meaner agents of cruelty. See Matt. xxvi. 67, xxvii. 27—30.

they pierced my hands and my feet] See critical Note. Retaining without any doubt this interpretation, we see the fierce soldiery, the hounds of the chief hunters, in the very act of piercing (*digging*, as the word literally

17 I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me.

18 [e]They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword; [†]my darling [†]from the power of the dog.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

22 [f]I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

ce 23.
19.
+

† Heb. *my only one.*
† Heb. *from the hand.*
f Heb. 2. 12

means), with rough and ruthless hands, the feet and hands, and nailing them to the cross.

17. *I may tell all my bones*] All the framework of the body, every bone, so to speak, stands out in terrible relief under the strain of crucifixion; the body of the crucified is a living lesson in anatomy. The terms are too strong to be explained by mere physical exhaustion.

they look and stare upon me] Cf. Luke xxiii. 35, where the people gaze on the naked frame of the Man of sorrows hanging before them in its awful beauty and agony. The last words, "stare upon me" (in Hebrew יראו בי), have generally the meaning of looking with complacency or triumph on a foe. It is a phrase common in Davidic psalms, and it occurs twice on the Moabite stone, lines 4 and 6: a point of some importance, considering the connection of David with Moab both by descent and family circumstances; see 1 S. xxii. 3, 4. See Pss. xxvii. 13, xxxvii. 34, liv. 7, lix. 10.

18. *They part*, &c.] The act described in this verse is not applicable either to David, or to any personage whose history is recorded in the Bible, save to Him whose disciple saw and described the fulfilment; see John xix. 24. It could indeed only occur in the case of one who had been stripped as a preliminary to execution.

19. *be not thou far*] Cf. *vv.* 1 and 11.

O my strength] The Hebrew word, which occurs in no other passage, means source or substance of all strength, here with special reference to physical exhaustion. Compare Luke xxii. 43, where the word "strengthening" (ἐνισχύων) refers not to spiritual, but to physical support. Compare also the next verse in St Luke with the supplication "haste thee to help me."

20. *from the sword*] This word, applicable to David in his sore distress, is equally so to our Lord. The "sword" was in fact the special symbol of the authority by which He was condemned to death. See Rom. xiii. 4, where St Paul speaks of the *Roman* magistrate. The prayer for deliverance from death is regarded by some critics as unsuitable to our Saviour: they must be strangely unmindful of His own words "remove this cup from me." Calvin remarks: "Si roget quispiam quomodo hoc Christo aptari possit, quem Pater non eripuit a morte; respondeo uno verbo, fuisse potentius ereptum, quam si periculo occursum foret: quanto scilicet plus est resurgere a morte, quam gravi morbo sanari."

my darling] Lit. "my only one;" but the word "darling" expresses the meaning with singular grace and power. The term is admitted in this and in the corresponding passage Ps. xxxv. 17 to apply to the soul, a usage peculiar to David; but in what precise sense is questioned; probably as the one thing in comparison with which nothing that belongs to man is precious; a statement true of each man's soul, true in the highest sense of that soul which was "poured out unto death" as a ransom for humanity: cf. Isai. liii. 10—12.

the power of the dog] In this and the following verse the figures, under which the persecutors have been represented, are brought together. The power of the dog, lit. "the hand," is a peculiar expression, and points to the agents or executioners; see Note on *v.* 16.

21. *the lion's mouth*] See *v.* 13. The reference is certain, and it supplies an additional argument, were such needed, against the misinterpretation of *v.* 16, discussed in the critical Note.

thou hast heard me] This clause must refer to the last hour, when the fatal blow had been inflicted. When the work of the enemy is completed, and not until then, comes the answer which assures deliverance.

the horns of the unicorns] Or, "the wild bulls." See Dr Tristram's remarks quoted on Job xxxix. 9. He identifies the rēm with the extinct auerochs.

22, 23. The whole strain changes: the clouds are dispersed: from the depth of humiliation, the prostration of strength, the agony of death, the dust of the grave, the speaker passes at once into a state of perfect peace and exultation. Such a transition David may have been able to realize by events in his own life, else had the representation been unreal and cold: but in order to realize it so vividly his spirit must have been raised into a sphere of spiritual life, which gave a new meaning to all that he had experienced. We may also surely infer that this psalm could not have been written in the midst of afflictions so terrible—then the joy would have

23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

25 My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.

g Ps. 2. 8. & 72. 11 & 86. 9.

27 [g] All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

28 For the kingdom *is* the LORD'S: and he *is* the governor among the nations.

29 All *they that be* fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

31 They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

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been premature: nor could it have been written afterwards by David, in his own person, for the sufferings are represented as present, and as terminating in death. Spoken in the Person of Christ all is clear; the transition of feeling corresponds exactly to that described in the last verses of the 53rd and the first part of the 54th chapters of Isaiah, where the joy of God's sacrificed servant is shared by the redeemed people, and sealed by the conversion of the heathen.

22. *I will declare*] See Heb. ii. 12, where these words are expressly assigned to the "Captain of our salvation" made "perfect through sufferings."

my brethren] Cf. Matt. xxviii. 10.

24. Each phrase in this verse finds a distinct echo in Isaiah. See especially liii. 3.

25. *of thee*] Not, as the English phrase implies, "about Thee," but "proceeding from Thee:" the source of praise is in God: His act here supplies the motive, His Spirit the grace, of prayer.

in the great congregation] Ewald points out that the expressions in this clause imply that the sanctuary was in existence in the time of the writer, and that the offerings of sacrifices would be witnessed by crowds of worshippers: see note on *v.* 3.

26. *The meek*] Men of lowly spirit, equivalent to "the poor" in our Lord's discourse on the mount.

shall eat] This may be understood of the sacrificial meat partaken of by friends, and distributed to the poor, on occasions of thanksgiving. The sense is equally good and true in reference to the Antitype, whose sacrificed Body, offered once for all on the Cross, is given as spiritual food to the faithful in the Eucharist. Thus Eusebius quoted by Bp. Wordsworth; see also Stier on Isaiah lv. 2, and note on Song Sol. v. 1.

your heart shall live for ever] For that food preserves body and soul unto everlasting life. The reference to this in John vi. 51 is scarcely questionable.

27. The general conversion of the heathen is described in terms which found their full explanation in our Lord's last commission to His apostles; see Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. The anticipation, however, of a general conversion of the heathen belongs to David's sphere of thought; see note on Ps. xviii. 49, and Introd.

29. *All they that be fat*] The word may, as in other passages, mean "All the mighty on the earth;" but the general purport of this clause would seem to be that none shall truly prosper but those who recognize the God of David as their God by partaking of the gifts which are offered on His altar: the spiritual application is obvious.

go down to the dust] *i.e.* to the grave, see note on *v.* 14.

bow before him] Willingly or unwillingly acknowledging Him as their King.

none can keep] The connection of this clause with the context is questioned, but to quicken a soul means to give or to preserve its true life, and the most obvious and natural meaning is that suggested by our Version: all alike depend upon God: the prosperous must worship if they are to be fed: all mortals must bow before Him, and none can live save by His gift.

30. *A seed*] Not merely the present race, but their posterity: each succeeding generation of worshippers, with special allusion to the grace of regeneration. Cf. Ps. lxxxvii. 6.

31. *that he hath done this*] The expression is emphatic: it declares the complete accomplishment of God's purpose: see Ps. xxxvii. 5, where A.V. has "He shall bring it to pass." Our Saviour's last word τετέλεσται, "it is finished," if not referring directly to this passage, as Hengstenberg argues with great force, certainly supplies a perfect commentary upon it.

NOTE on Psalm xxii. 16.

The extreme importance of this text, both on theological and critical grounds, demands a full investigation into the true reading and meaning of the principal word.

The Hebrew MSS. have כארי, כארו, and כרו. The first of these is the textus receptus of the Masora. It is the only reading found in Jewish editions of the Bible, and it is supported by the Targum. The meaning, according to the punctuation, which varies in the MSS., would be either (1) "as a lion," or (2) "digging," sc. "piercing," or (3) "diggers," "piercers of." The second meaning, "fodientes," is well supported. It assumes כארי, *caari*, to be the plural participle, with apocope of ם: for which good authority can be adduced. This was apparently the old Jewish interpretation of the reading, as is shewn by the Masora parva in loc., which states that כארי with *kametz* occurs twice with two different meanings: now in Isai. xxxviii. 13, the other passage to which the Masora refers, the sense is certain, "as a lion:" here therefore the Masorites must have taken it to mean "fodientes." See De Rossi, 'Var. Lect.' IV. p. 17. The third meaning differs but slightly —it takes the punctuation with *tsere*, sc. כָּאֲרֵי, for which the authority of some MSS. is adduced by De Rossi, l. c. p. 16. It appears also that the Targumist took the word to be a participle. In the Antwerp Polyglott the reading is נכתין אידי ורגלי, "biting my hands and my feet." In Walton's 'Polyglott' and in the 'Bibl. Mag. Rabbin.' the words היך כאריא, "as a lion," are inserted, probably, as Pococke ('Notæ Misc. in Portam Mosis,' p. 152) suggests, sono verbi vicino id ipsi suggerente. The interpretation (1) "as a lion" presents insuperable difficulties: and even this sense, faulty as it is, is only obtained by inserting a participle, "watching" or "biting," for which no authority can be adduced. The lion cannot be said to *surround* his prey, or to watch its hands and feet, or to bite them. The figure is incongruous. Thus Ewald, p. 271, "aber weder passt das Bild von Umgeben, noch gehört das Bild vom Löwen überhaupt hieher." In fact the figure of the lion has been already used in its proper place, *v.* 13.

If therefore the Masoretic reading be retained, its most natural interpretation "fodientes" would give the same sense, though with a somewhat harsh construction, as that adopted in our A.V.

The second reading, כארו, *caaru* "they dug or pierced," has in its favour the unanimous consent of all the other ancient Versions. Among these, special importance attaches to the LXX. as a translation without any possible bias, representing the old, pre-Christian tradition of the Jews. They render it ὤρυξαν; and are followed by the Vulg. "foderunt;" the Arabic نقبوا, an important witness to the sense, not merely "perruperunt[1]," as Walton renders it, but "perforaverunt;" see Freytag, 'Lex. Ar.' s. v. Thus too the Syro-Hex. (quoted by Field, 'Hex.') renders the LXX. by a word which corresponds to ἔτρησαν, ἔτρωσαν, or ἔρρηξαν. With this agree the Æth. and Copt. The Syriac, an independent authority, has ܒܙܥܘ, foderunt. The evidence of Aquila is conclusive as to the text received by the Jews in the early Christian period. He gives ᾔσχυναν (a meaning derived, according to Pococke, p. 149, l. c., from the Syr. ܟܪܐ, pudefecit), or, as Field shews, ἐπέδησαν, or συνεπόδισαν: hence Jerome "vinxerunt." In either case it is clear that Aquila had a finite verb. It is evident that since one special object with Aquila was to oppose Christians, he would have adopted the reading with י, and the meaning "as a lion," had they been known in his time.

With regard to the Masoretic text, it must be observed that the Jews have suppressed with the greatest care all readings which do not agree with it. De Rossi observes (in the 'Dissertatio præliminaris,' Tom. IV. p. 4), "turning over the MSS. we observe, not without wonder and indignation, that there is scarcely a manuscript, scarcely a sheet of a manuscript, scarcely a reading differing, however slightly, from the Masora, which a Jewish scribe has not effaced, corrected, or changed, to bring it into accord with its directions. The Masoretic text as edited by Jacob ben Chaiim (Venice, 1526) has been followed both in Jewish and Christian editions without regard to ancient authorities, MSS., quotations, or versions, which undoubtedly preserve or indicate different, and, in many cases, preferable readings."

When therefore there are a few MSS. which differ from the Masora, their value is exceedingly enhanced; especially when they are supported by early versions and editions. De Rossi writes thus: "כארו, foderunt. Kenn. 39, forte 207, nunc 242, meus 337, ad marg. 218, Biblia Complut. Psalt. Bas. 1516." The Masora maj. on Num. xxiv. 9 states that in Psalm xxii. the Cthib, that is the MSS. reading, was כארו. Of special weight is the testimony of Jacob ben Chaiim himself, who says: "In some *most accurate* books I have found it written (the Cthib) כארו, and read (Kri) כארי." To this it may be added that some MSS. have כרו; a reading which Kimchi and other Jews attribute to Christians. It is, however, in all

[1] Dean Payne Smith observes that in Asseman's 'Acta Martyrum Orient.' I. 104 ܒܙܥ occurs for boring a martyr's feet through with an auger.

probability a conjectural emendation, substituting a common form for the ἅ. λ. כאר. In some MSS. the י has *shurek* וּ, evidently pointing to the reading כארו. It must be observed that the corruption of ו into י is one of the commonest errors of transcription (see Hitzig's remark quoted in critical Note on Ps. xxxvi. 1), and for the most part evidently without any intention to alter the sense. The mutual accusations of Christian and Jewish controversialists ought to be altogether abandoned. The early Masorites who read ו, and the Christians who preferred כרו, gave the same general interpretation.

On the whole the arguments in favour of כארו considered apart from the translation, and simply on critical grounds, appear to preponderate; if, however, כארי be retained, Pococke's view that it is merely a defective form equivalent to כארים is strongly supported. It is accepted by Reinke, Bohl, Moll, Phillips; and it is admitted to be grammatically unobjectionable by Winer, De Wette, and Gesen. 'Lehrg.' p. 526.

That כאר, כור and כרה are simply variants of one word may be assumed; and the meaning "dig" is tolerably certain. In the third form it is applied to digging a well, a tomb, and a pit; and in one passage (Ps. xl. 6, where see note), to digging, or piercing the ears. In Arabic كار = effodit; thus too كرا, fodit terram: see Freytag, s.v. Dig and pierce are equivalents in Greek, Latin, and other languages; and with reference to this passage, the statement of Gesenius, 'Th.' p. 671, "fodiendi verbum vulnerandi sensu aptissime telis hostilibus tribuitur," is equally, or even more applicable to nails driven into the hands and feet.

PSALM XXIII.

David's confidence in God's grace.

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD *is* [a] my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in † green pastures: he leadeth me beside the † still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

[a] Is. 40. 11. Jer. 23. 4. Ezek. 34. 11, 12, 23. John 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 25.

† Heb. pastures of tender grass.

† Heb. waters of quietness.

PSALM XXIII.

The freshness and simple solemnity of this psalm suggest to some that it was written by David in his early years of innocence. But see *v.* 5, and note. The experience of the Psalmist, also, is unlike that of any youth. The simple faith and realization of God's presence evidenced in the psalm recall 1 S. xvii. 37. Common opinion agrees with the inscription, and assigns the psalm to David; and the ascription to him is confirmed by the contents, the imagery, *vv.* 1, 2, &c., and by the occurrence of phrases characteristic of the Davidic psalms. These are mentioned as they occur.

No Christian hymn meets the wants of Christians in trial more completely than this strain of David, which scarcely needs the light of Christianity to disclose its full import, but shines, so to say, as a fixed star, by its own light: *vv.* 2, 3 describe as aptly as words can describe the peace of a Christian resting in Christ; *v.* 4, the fearlessness of a Christian in the literal valley of death-shade; *v.* 6, the perpetual dwelling of the redeemed with God. One supposition only accounts for such pointed and easy application: *i.e.* that the same divine Spirit dictated this ancient psalm and the gospel of Christ.

1. *my shepherd*] A common image in Scripture; Gen. xlviii. 15, xlix. 24; Ps. lxxx. 1; Isai. xl. 11; Jer. xxxi. 10; Ezek. xxxiv. 23. Christ, in the New Testament, applies these texts in some sort to Himself, John x. 27, 28. The force of the similitude can only be understood if we consider the deep solitudes in which the Eastern shepherds fed their flocks; the perpetual danger from sudden torrents, and from wolves and robbers; the parching thirst; the scanty streams; and the safety of the sheep depending upon the vigilance of their guardian. All such trials and dangers were known to David, 1 S. xvii. 34; also to Jacob and Moses, who speak in the places first quoted.

I shall not want] See Deut. ii. 7, viii. 9. The expression in the psalm is shorter and more absolute; its full import is, "I shall not, or cannot, want anything." The Prayer-book version, "therefore can I lack nothing," expresses this meaning.

2. *still waters*] Marg., waters of quietness: Prayer-book version, "waters of comfort." The waters of Shiloah, "that go softly" (Isai. viii. 6), are not parallel. The image exhibited is not that of the "stillness of waters," but rather of the "stillness of the flock," which, after restless motion, drinks peacefully at the long-sought stream. The original word used for *pastures* (see Note) occurs elsewhere (in the Pss.) only in lxv. 12, in this sense. The substantive rendered *green* occurs in the Pss. only here and in xxxvii. 2. Both these psalms are reputed David's.

3. *restoreth*] That is, "refreshes" and "quickens" by His Spirit, after intercourse with the world, as fresh pasture and sweet

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, [b] I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

[b] Ps. 3. 6. & 118. 6.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou † anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

† Heb. *makest fat.*

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD † for ever.

† Heb. *to length of days.*

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waters recruit the wandering sheep: see Ps. xix. 7, marg. The original word in the form here used is of rare occurrence. Elsewhere in the Pss. it occurs only Ps. lx. 1.

the paths of righteousness, &c.] That is, "the paths of security and peace;" see Ps. xvii. 5. See also Ps. cvii. 7; Prov. iv. 11; in which the "right path," or "path of righteousness," means the "straight, secure path," as opposed to the "devious, dangerous path of crime." Note, the images in *vv.* 1, 2, 4, 5, are physical; the spiritual image lies behind. In the *v.* before us the physical image is in some sort abandoned, and the conversion of the soul to God, and His guidance in the paths of holiness, are all but expressed. See Pss. lxv. 5, cxxxii. 9.

for his name's sake] See Pss. xxv. 11, xxxi. 3, lxxix. 9, &c. "Not on account of any deserts of mine, but on account of His great name and fame as a merciful and gracious God." Ex. xxxiv. 5; Pss. v. 11, vi. 4.

4. *Yea, though I walk*, &c.] The image is partially changed; it is no longer that of *sheep* guarded by a shepherd; it is rather that of a wanderer in the midst of a valley, dark as the shadow of death. In the midst of this darkness and horror, like that of a horrible pit (Job xxviii. 3), or of a dark, deep, sunless ravine between mountains (Jer. xiii. 16), or of a wild, uninhabited, desolate, wilderness (Jer. ii. 6), or rather, of the grave (Job x. 21), the wanderer *is without fear*, guided and supported by the rod and staff of his protecting Shepherd. The second of the words, "rod and staff," seems merely explanatory of the first; the rod of the shepherd (Micah vii. 14) is a staff supporting the wanderer's steps. In Zech. xi. 7, the shepherd has two staves: one to lead the flock, and the other to defend it. So the protecting shepherd here may possibly be described. The original word (staff) employed seems a favourite expression of David, 2 S. xxii. 19; Ps. xviii. 18 (Heb.). De Wette quotes Morier's second journey to Persia, p. 179, as illustrative of the image of this verse: "Near Ispahan is a valley, inconceivably dreary, desolate, waterless, called the Valley of the Angel of Death."

5. *Thou preparest a table*, &c.] Still a new image. Jehovah is David's princely entertainer and host. "A table (Prov. ix. 2; Isai. xxi. 5) is spread for him in full security; his foes look on and are helpless; his head is anointed with oil (Ps. xlv. 7; Eccles. ix. 8; Luke vii. 46), so that nothing may be needed for joy and cheerfulness: his cup (Pss. xi. 6, xvi. 5) is full and runs over." The words, "*in the presence of mine enemies*," &c., suggest some special occasion or some recollection of the past which here breaks forth. They are illustrated (as Perowne remarks) by the circumstances mentioned 2 S. xvii. 27—29, when David and his companions, in their faintness and weariness, were refreshed and entertained through Barzillai's kindness.

6. *goodness and mercy*] *unalloyed*, like good angels sent of God, track my footsteps, and *pursue* me whithersoever I go; and I dwell in the house of Jehovah "to length of days" (marg.). The image in *v.* 5 of Jehovah a princely entertainer is continued. A similar image occurs Pss. xxvii. 4 and xxxvi. 8. David is a guest (Ps. xv. 1) in the house of "his friend and protector," filled to abundance with His gifts *for ever*. See Ps. xxi. 4. The original word (see Note) rendered "I will dwell" is of doubtful import; there seems, however, no sufficient ground for altering, except as above, the received rendering.

The force of this psalm is impaired in the Prayer-book version by the substitution throughout of the future tense for the present. "He shall feed. He shall convert. I will fear," &c.

NOTES on PSALM XXIII. 2, 6.

2. נאות is often (says Kay, Ps. lxv. 12; Jer. ix. 10, xxiii. 10. &c.) coupled with "wilderness," and seems to mean a spot in which a dwelling or homestead could be placed in a barren land. The original import is "dwelling."

6. שַׁבְתִּי, according to present punctuation, is the pret. of שׁוּב. Perhaps it is better to alter the punctuation (שִׁבְתִּי), and thus regard it as inf. with suff. from יָשַׁב. Del. renders "I return, *and dwell* in the house, &c.;" constructio prægnans; the words in italics being understood.

PSALM XXIV.

1 *God's lordship in the world.* 3 *The citizens of his spiritual kingdom.* 7 *An exhortation to receive him.*

A Psalm of David.

THE [a] earth *is* the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 [b] For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

3 [c] Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

4 [d] † He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

[a] Deut. 10. 14. Job 41. 11. Ps. 50. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28.
[b] Job 38. 6. 1 S. 104. 5. & 136. 6.
[c] Ps. 15. 1.
[d] Isai. 33. 15, 16.
† Heb. *The clean of hands*

PSALM XXIV.

This psalm carries on the strain of feeling with which the twenty-third concludes: that expresses the longing to dwell in God's house, this describes the characteristics of those who are admitted into it. It consists of two parts, of which the second undoubtedly belongs to an occasion when the ark, the symbol and pledge of the Lord's Presence, was brought into the sanctuary. The old Hebrew interpreters generally held that it was composed by David, when admonished by the prophet Gad to choose a place for the building, with a view to its recitation when the work should be completed. The words however seem to indicate a present event rather than the vivid realization of a future one. On the whole it seems far more probable that David wrote this and the 15th psalm to be recited when the ark was brought from the house of Obed-edom, and placed upon Mount Zion, 2 S. vi. 12. This was an event of the greatest importance in the national history. The possession of the land was sealed by the capture of Zion; the king of their own deliberate choice reigned over the people, and, after a long series of triumphs, established the ark, the symbol and pledge of the Divine Presence, in the citadel of their capital. The adaptation to liturgical use is obvious; it was evidently intended to be recited in alternate parts, probably by the High-priest and a choir of Levites. According to the inscription in the Septuagint, confirmed by Talmudic tradition, it was chanted in the Temple on the first day of the week: a remarkable fact, considering its typical application to the resurrection or ascension of our Lord.

The division is marked by Selah, *v.* 6. The first portion is subdivided into three strophes: the second has two strophes, each of three full verses.

1. The declaration of the universal sovereignty of the Lord has a manifest bearing upon the circumstances of the psalm, since it shews at once the majesty of Him who was about to be enthroned in Zion, and His condescension in taking up His abode among men.

2. *For he*] The Hebrew is emphatic, "for it is He who hath founded it."

upon the seas] Or, **over the seas**, alluding to the rising of the dry land over the waters described in Genesis i. The Psalmist does not of course refer to geological speculations, but describes natural phenomena, the earth raised above the seas, girt by the ocean, and resting apparently upon its waters. The contrast between its stability and the apparent insecurity of such a foundation served but to deepen his apprehension of the Almightiness of the Creator.

3. *the hill of the LORD*] The hill where His sanctuary is placed, whether Mount Zion, or, after the building of the temple, Mount Moriah: but in either case as typical of His eternal abode in heaven.

4. *He that hath*, &c.] David selects four cardinal points of character, two internal, two external, each having its correlative: cleanness of hands combined with purity of heart; freedom from vain desires with observance of oaths. Of the two internal principles the one, purity of heart, includes all godliness (see the marginal reference); the other involves the subjugation of the principle of all ungodliness: to lift up the soul unto vanity means to fix the desires upon what is wrong, false, worthless, to be filled with inordinate desire; it includes all that is comprehended under the scriptural term "lust," the lust of the eye, the flesh, and the pride of life. Cleanness of hands, that is, perfect honesty in dealings between man and man, and observance of oaths, were matters of especial importance to the king, and directly connected with the sacredness of the house of God.

5. *the blessing*] Or, "blessing;" the article is unnecessary. Dr Kay compares Gen. xxxii. 29 and xxxv. 9.

righteousness] To receive righteousness is to have the gift of righteousness, grace to resemble God in His essential attributes, and conformity to the divine will and the divine nature. It also includes the substantial fact of justification, for such a man has righteousness imputed to him. It is a phrase of great importance in its bearings upon the doctrinal teaching of the psalms. The man who brings the conditions of acceptance, honesty of heart

6 This *is* the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, ‖ O Jacob. Selah.

‖ Or, O God of Jacob.

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

PSALM XXV.

1 David's confidence in prayer. 7 He prayeth for remission of sins, 16 and for help in affliction.

A Psalm of David.

UNTO thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

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and uprightness in dealings, will receive grace for grace.

6. *This is the generation*] The word "this" is emphatic, such is the true character, &c.

O Jacob] The exact connection of this word with the sentence is questioned. The A.V. follows the generality of the Greek versions (Aq., see Field's 'Hex.'). The marginal rendering, which is supported by some of the ablest commentators, supposes either an ellipsis of the word "God," or a various reading supplying it, of which there are indications both in some ancient Versions (LXX., Vulg. and Syr.,) and in two MSS. Jacob may however be taken in apposition to generation, in which case the meaning would be, "this is the generation of them that seek Thee, this is the true Jacob, these the true inheritors of the blessings, Israelites not only in name, but in spirit." Bishop Wordsworth refers to the narrative of Genesis where Jacob is described as seeing "God face to face," and naming the place Peniel: ch. xxxii. 30. For the use of the word "generation" cf. Ps. xiv. 5, xxii. 30.

7. This verse is evidently sung by the choir of Levites, bearing and accompanying the ark as it is brought to the gates of the sanctuary, or of the citadel of Zion. The epithet "everlasting doors" presents some difficulty: it is referred by some to the antiquity of the fortress captured from the Jebusites (see Stanley, 'S. and P.' p. 173), a very unsatisfactory explanation; or it may describe the hopes or convictions of the writer, who regarded the Presence of Jehovah, signified and assured by the ark, as a pledge of permanence: but it is more probable that the eternal gates of heaven, represented by the gates through which the ark was passing, were in the mind of the Psalmist. The reference to the Ascension of our Lord is recognized by all the Fathers, and by our Church, which appoints this psalm to be read at that great festival.

8. The answer apparently implies that this entrance of the Lord into the tabernacle took place after a conquest achieved by His interposition. It belongs therefore to the reign of David rather than to that of Solomon. "Strong" and "mighty" are not mere synonyms; the former denotes an essential attribute, the second its manifestation by acts; it is used of Christ, "The mighty God," Isai. ix. 6.

10. *The LORD of hosts*] The word "hosts" means "armies;" but the armies of the Almighty are not merely those of warriors fulfilling His will, and dependent upon His favour for victory, but include angels and the heavenly bodies, all the agencies of the visible and invisible universe. The epithet is constantly used in the books of Kings, doubtless with reference both to the assurance of power and victory which it involved, and to the subordination of all objects of idolatrous nature-worship to the one omnipotent will. See Ew. 'Gesch.,' p. 81, note.

PSALM XXV.

This psalm consists of prayers and pious ejaculations, not arranged in systematic order, and apparently not referring to any special events in the Psalmist's life. The great beauty of the language, the fervency and depth of feeling, and a certain loftiness of thought, combined with an intense sense of sin, see *vv.* 7, 11, 18 (points fully recognized by Ewald, pp. 313 and 309), confirm the inscription which assigns it to David, by whom it may have been written at a period of distress and spiritual suffering at the latter part of his life; see the last verse, which, though doubtless appropriate to the time of the Babylonish exile, would be a fit expression of the king's feelings when Israel was smitten by the most terrible pestilence recorded in its annals, 2 S. xxiv. The only serious objection to this view rests upon the fact that the psalm is one of nine alphabetic psalms, each verse in the Hebrew beginning with a letter of the alphabet, with some exceptions (see critical Note) in regular succession. On this account chiefly Ewald and others, including Perowne, assign to it a late date, perhaps that of the exile, to which,

a Ps. 22. 5. & 31. 1. & 34. 8. Isai. 28. 16. Rom. 10. 11.

2 O my God, I [a] trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

b Ps. 27. 11. & 86. 11. & 119.

4 [b] Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

c Ps. 103. 17. & 106. 1. & 107. 1. Jer. 33. 11. † Heb. *thy bowels.*

6 Remember, O LORD, [c] † thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they *have been* ever of old.

7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

8 Good and upright *is* the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

11 For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it *is* great.

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however, some expressions are singularly unsuitable; see *v.* 13. But we know too little of the laws of Hebrew poetry to ascertain the force of this objection; Köster, a good authority on such points, attaches no weight to it: the object of the arrangement was certainly not to display ingenuity, but to help the memory; a point of practical importance whether the psalm was intended for public recitation or for private devotion. The same observations apply to Ps. xxxiv., to which this bears a near resemblance both in tone of thought and beauty of expression, as also in some peculiarities not easily accounted for, both omitting one letter (vav), both too repeating the letter ph, and the word *pedah*, sc. redeem, at the close.

1. *do I lift up my soul*] There may possibly be a reference to the expression "lifted up his soul unto vanity," Ps. xxiv. 4. The fundamental distinction between the godly and ungodly men consists in the object to which their affections are directed; such is the exact meaning of the expression; see Deut. xxiv. 15, marg.; Ps. lxxxvi. 4, cxliii. 8.

2. *I trust...ashamed*] Cf. Ps. xxxi. 1, 17; Isai. xlix. 23: the expression is specially used of disappointed expectations; see Job vi. 20.

let not mine enemies] So Ps. xiii. 4, a feeling common enough, but peculiarly strong in David; cf. 2 S. xxiv. 14. A writer in the time of the Babylonish exile would rather have prayed that the enemies should cease to triumph over him.

3. *wait on thee*] See xxvii. 14; Isai. xxvi. 8, xlix. 23.

transgress] The Hebrew has the special sense of treachery, when men break their covenant, whether in reference to their king, their friend (Job vi. 15), their church (Ps. lxxiii. 15), or their God (Hosea v. 7, vi. 7). Compare also Isai. xxiv. 16. The LXX. ἀνομοῦντες; but Aq., Sym., Theod., more correctly ἀποστατοῦντες.

without cause] Thus Ps. lix. 3, 4. There is a bitter irony in the expression, as though traitors and apostates sought for pretexts, but could find none.

5. *in thy truth*] This denotes more than "lead me to the knowledge of God's truth;" His faithfulness and grace is, so to speak, the atmosphere in which the believer moves, the light which surrounds him and directs his steps.

7. *sins*] There is a deep consciousness of sin in this verse; two kinds of sins are indicated, sins of youthful passion and frailty, and sins of wilful transgression, such as belong to maturer age. The Psalmist feels himself liable to punishment for both; this confession goes therefore further than that of Job xiii. 26; hence the fervour of the appeal in this and the preceding verse to the tender mercies, lovingkindnesses and goodness of the LORD.

transgressions] It is to be observed that the Psalmist in this and in the eleventh and eighteenth verses uses the three words, sin, transgression, iniquity, which David employs repeatedly and in combination, when he is deploring his own great sin: cf. Ps. xxxii. 5, xxxviii. 3, 4, 18, li. 1, 2, 9.

8. *sinners*] Not the ungodly who rebel against God, see note on Ps. i. 1, but those who err from infirmity, or natural sinfulness—labes humana; see li. 5.

9. *The meek will he guide in judgment*] The one condition on which sinners (see *v.* 8) can build any hope is "poverty of spirit," *i.e.* the sense of weakness, helplessness, and contrition.

10. *testimonies*] The laws which testify His will, and appeal to the conscience of man. See note on Ps. xix. 7.

11. *For thy name's sake*] All appeals for mercy rest upon faith in the attributes which are involved in the Name Jehovah: see Exod.

12 What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose.

13 His soul †shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

14 [d] The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; ‖and he will shew them his covenant.

15 Mine eyes *are* ever toward the LORD; for he shall †pluck my feet out of the net.

16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I *am* desolate and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: *O* bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with †cruel hatred.

20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

† Heb. ...ll lodge ...good-...ss. [d] Prov. 3. ‖ Or, and ...cove-...nt to ...e them ...w it. † Heb. ...g ...th.

† Heb. *hatred of violence.*

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xxxiv. 5—7. The greatness of the sin presses upon the heart in proportion to its sensitiveness, and its knowledge of that Name.

13. *shall dwell at ease*] Or, **abide in goodness**, *i.e.* in prosperity spiritual and temporal. "His soul" means the man in his own person, as distinct from his seed or posterity. The word "abide," literally "lodge," indicates that the abode here after all is but a sojourning, our earthly home but a caravanserai.

14. *The secret*] The word signifies close personal intercourse, inner communion; the Lord not only counsels and instructs those who fear Him, but abides with them as their friend. See Job xxix. 4, and compare Amos iii. 7. Hupfeld in a critical note shews that it is probably derived from an Arabic root, which occurs also in Syriac, meaning "secret and confidential converse." Aq. has ἀπόῤῥητον, Sym. ὁμιλία.

and he will shew] Or, **and His covenant to instruct them.** Dr Kay has "so as to make them know it," *i.e.* so as to reveal its deep inner meaning to them.

17. *are enlarged*] This is probably the true meaning, though the translation is contested. See Note below.

18. *Look upon*] See note on 2 S. xvi. 12.

19. *cruel hatred*] Or, "hatred of violence," as in the margin, *i.e.* hatred proceeding altogether from malignity, without justification in any act of its object: see note on *v.* 3.

21. *Let integrity and uprightness*] The Psalmist prays that, notwithstanding the sins and transgressions which he deplores (see *v.* 7), he may henceforth be preserved by the favour of God, shewn in the communication of moral and spiritual graces, and secured by faithful waiting. Such a hope is inseparable from the consciousness of absolute dependence upon God.

for I wait on thee] See *v.* 3.

22. This last verse in the original does not follow the alphabetical order, and it may possibly be a pious ejaculation added during the captivity. The point is however doubtful. There is another example of the irregularity, Ps. xxxiv. 22, and the prayer is one which at any age might have been offered by a pious Israelite, and, if by any, certainly by David, especially after the calamities of his later years.

NOTES on PSALM XXV. 2, 17.

2. The deviations from alphabetic order may perhaps be accounted for in part by slight inaccuracies of the transcribers: thus in *v.* 2, "my God" may be placed after "I trust in thee," which gives בך as the first word. The omission of the letter ו is possibly owing to the misplacement of two clauses, the third clause in *v.* 5, and the third also in *v.* 7, both of which disturb the parallelism: the verse may have begun with ולמדני. The repetition of ראה in the 18th and 19th verses was probably owing to a very common and natural error of transcription, the writer's eye being caught by the beginning of the second clause. It is not so easy to supply a word beginning with a ק in *v.* 18. In the corresponding verse, Ps. xxxiv. 18, we have the word קרב, which may suggest קרבה אל, "draw nigh unto," as in Ps. lxix. 18 (Heb. 19): see also Lam. iii. 57. On the last verse see footnote. Köster, however, holds that such deviations undoubtedly proceed from the author himself, who used the alphabetic order as a means, without subjecting himself to it. 'Einleitung,' p. xxiii.: cf. Introd., Appendix.

17. The question is whether הרחיבו can be taken intransitively. This is denied by Hupfeld and others; but Delitzsch shews that as האליף and האריך mean "increase" and "endure," so this word may also mean "enlarge themselves:" and this seems preferable to altering the text, as those critics propose.

PSALM XXVI.

David resorteth unto God in confidence of his integrity.

A Psalm of David.

JUDGE me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* I shall not slide.

2 [a] Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

3 For thy lovingkindness *is* before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.

4 [b] I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

5 I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked.

6 I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place [†] where thine honour dwelleth.

[a] Ps. 7. 9.
[b] Ps. 1. 1.
[†] Heb. *of the tabernacle of thy honour.*

PSALM XXVI.

There are points of contact between this and the two preceding psalms: the phraseology is similar, in some passages identical (see notes on *vv.* 1, 3), and the train of thought would seem to be suggested by the conditions of acceptance set forth in the twenty-fourth psalm. The tone of feeling, the illustrations (2, 6, 12), and the style, are those of David; but the absence of all reference to the consciousness of sin, which haunted him after his great fall, indicates an earlier date than that assigned to the twenty-fifth psalm. It may belong to the same date as the fifteenth and the twenty-fourth, and have been written shortly after the ark was brought from the house of Obed-edom. Some critics assign it to the period of Saul's persecution, but the mention of the tabernacle and the altar (6, 8) can scarcely be reconciled with a time when David was unable to approach them: others prefer the period of Absalom's revolt, which seems incompatible with the earnest protestations of freedom from the very sins which then cast their dark shadow on David's heart. Hitzig draws from this an argument (which falls of course with the assumed date) against the Davidic authorship, and on very slight grounds attributes the psalm to Jeremiah. The grace and dignity of the style are recognized by Ewald, who holds that the psalm was composed in a time of national visitation by pestilence.

It consists of one introductory verse, three strophes each of three verses, and one of two verses, forming a triumphant close.

1. *in mine integrity*] Bp. Wordsworth notes the reference to *v.* 21 of the preceding psalm. Sincerity here best expresses the meaning of the word, which is used of single-hearted men: see note on Job i. 1.

I have trusted] See xxv. 2.

slide] To slip, as in Ps. xviii. 36. David is willing to be judged for the past because he is conscious of integrity, but his confidence that in future he shall be preserved from *vacillation* (the exact meaning of the Hebrew word) is grounded on his stedfast trust in the Lord.

2. Two words in this verse, "examine" and "try," are used specially of the process of refining precious metals, a metaphor of frequent occurrence. See Pss. xii. 6, xvii. 3. The word rendered "prove" is the same as "tempt" in the sense of testing. David wishes his inmost thoughts and tendencies to be thoroughly scrutinized: the process may be painful, the refiner's fire must scorch, but he has no fear for the result.

3. *walked in thy truth*] See notes on Pss. i. 1, xxv. 5. The word "walked" in Hebrew is emphatic, implying long and active habits of obedience.

4. *vain persons*] Or, "men of vanity." The same word is used in Ps. xxiv. 4.

dissemblers] Literally, "hidden ones." Our translation gives the true meaning.

6. *wash mine hands*] As the priests were commanded to do before they *approached the altar;* Exod. xxx. 17—21. See also Deut. xxi. 6, and Matt. xxvii. 24, which shews how generally this symbol of guiltlessness was adopted. Cf. Ps. xxiv. 4.

compass] Some commentators suppose that David speaks of a solemn procession round the altar; but there is no allusion to such a custom in the law, and the word "compass" probably means near and habitual approach; Hupfeld.

7. *That I may publish*] This may imply that David recited psalms of thanksgiving while the sacrifice was being offered. Both this and the preceding verse may either refer to sacrifices offered by his command, and to psalms dictated by him to the choirs of Levites, or they may be understood in a spiritual sense. The former is the more natural and obvious interpretation.

8. *the habitation*] Or, "refuge;" the house of God is represented as the true home or

9 [1] Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with † bloody men:

10 In whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is † full of bribes.

11 But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.

12 My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

PSALM XXVII.

1 David sustaineth his faith by the power of God, 4 by his love to the service of God, 9 by prayer.

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD *is* [a] my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

[a] Micah 7. 8.

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asylum of the believer, where he finds refuge and protection. The word, however, may simply denote "habitation," God's dwelling-place. For the feeling, cf. Pss. xxiii. 6, xxvii. 4, lxiii. 2.

the place] This version gives the true meaning, but the original words are precise and formal; the place where the glory of God is enshrined means the mercy-seat, where the Lord manifested His Presence.

9. *Gather not*] The two meanings "gather" and "take away" are combined in the original word. David prays not to be numbered with the transgressors, or to share their fate. See Matt. xiii. 30. Compare Æschylus, 'Seven against Thebes,' 597—613, and Horace, 'Od.' III. 2. 30.

bloody men] See note on Ps. v. 6.

10. *mischief*] Or, "crafty device," conceived in the heart, but executed by the hand; the expression denotes the promptitude with which the evil purpose is carried into effect.

full of bribes] This points at the magistracy, or high officers of state; the corruption of justice was then, and ever has been, the cancer of Oriental despotisms. The words are those of a king: cf. xv. 5.

11. *integrity*] refers to *v.* 1.

redeem me] Here specially, deliver me from the evils which will overwhelm the guilty.

12. *in an even place*] Or, **on level ground:** where one can advance without obstruction or danger of falling. See xxvii. 11. There may be a reference to "equity," another meaning of the Hebrew word. David, however, is speaking not of his own uprightness, but of the security from danger which the Lord vouchsafes to him as a faithful servant.

in the congregations] David ever connects his feelings of thankfulness for deliverance and support with the duty of proclaiming God's goodness to His people; cf. xviii. 49, xxii. 25, lxviii. 26. See also Pss. xxxii. 11, xxxv. 18, xl. 10.

PSALM XXVII.

This psalm expresses unshaken confidence in the midst of urgent dangers. The enemies of the Psalmist have been foiled (*v.* 2), but they still threaten him; the recurrence of an attack is imminent (*v.* 3); he is closely watched (*v.* 6); he prays earnestly, not without a consciousness that he has incurred God's anger (*v.* 9), but with a certainty that his prayer is heard, that he will be delivered, pass the rest of his life near the sanctuary, and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving in God's tabernacle (*v.* 6). The indications, if not conclusive, yet point naturally to the time when David was pursued by the army of Absalom, probably to the time when the last and decisive battle was about to be fought. Ewald, who, while recognizing the similarity of the style to David's, assigns this and the twenty-third psalm to some unknown author, holds that the Psalmist must have been a warrior, carrying on a desperate struggle on the frontiers of Palestine; and admits that these notices are specially applicable to the circumstances of David's exile. The internal evidences of Davidic authorship are strong, as may be seen by examination of the marginal references to other psalms (especially to the third), which are admitted by Ewald and Hitzig to be productions of David. Hitzig, disregarding the plain indications of warfare, attributes the psalm to Jeremiah, but recognizes its connection with that which precedes it; a point of importance in reference to Ewald's assumption. The whole psalm gives lively expression to the feelings which have ever characterized the heroes of God.

The rhythmical arrangement of this psalm is striking and somewhat peculiar, resembling very nearly the latter part of the nineteenth psalm, especially in the subdivision, or double-beat of the clauses, expressing with singular force the rapid alternations of thoughts and feelings. The division at end of *v.* 6 is distinctly marked.

1. *my light*] This is the first, and, in the Old Testament, the only passage in which the term "light" is expressly applied to the LORD; although expressions full of the same beautiful thought occur in Isaiah (see ch. lx. 1, 20) and Micah vii. 8. In the New Testament we read "God is light," 1 John i. 5; Christ "the true light," John i. 7—9; and the Lamb the light of the Church, Rev. xxi 23.

my salvation] Cf. Exod. xv. 2; a hymn ever in the mind of David. See also Isai. lxii. 11, which shews that in this passage "my salvation" is equivalent to "my Saviour."

[b] Ps. 118. 6. [b]the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, †came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

† Heb. *approached against me.*

3 [c]Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I *be* confident.

[c] Ps. 3. 6.

4 One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold †the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

† Or, *the delight.*

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices †of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

† Heb. *of shouting.*

7 Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with

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strength of my life] Or, "stronghold of my life," in which my life is preserved; or, it may be, "my living stronghold." The expression, peculiarly suitable to David, does not occur elsewhere, but stands in close connection of thought with Ps. xviii. 1. See also Ps. cxviii. 14.

2. *came upon me to eat up my flesh*] The words "came upon me" in Hebrew refer to warfare (Hupfeld), and cannot therefore apply to Jeremiah. The expression, "to eat up my flesh," suggested, doubtless, by David's early experience, compares his enemies to beasts of prey; cf. Ps. xiv. 4 and xxii. 13, 16. The same figure is common in classic authors, *e.g.* Homer, 'Il.' IV. 35, XXII. 347, and XXIV. 212.

they stumbled] David may allude to some unrecorded event of the war before the final struggle, but the words probably express only his certainty of the enemies' discomfiture. The word "they" is emphatic; "as for them, they," &c.

3. *Though an host should encamp*] It is evident that these must be the words of a leader or king; they were probably written in anticipation of an immediate advance of Absalom's host, when "Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead," 2 S. xvii. 26.

4—6. These two verses evidently imply that the Psalmist is in exile, but is confident that his desire will be granted, that he will speedily return to the sanctuary, and abide there permanently.

4. *the beauty*] Or, "the graciousness." The word (which occurs but seldom, *e.g.* Ps. xc. 17, Zech. xi. 7) implies grace, beauty, loveliness. David speaks not of the outward beauty of the sanctuary, but of the gracious attributes which its ritual symbolized. Of that delight absence could not deprive him, though, like a true Israelite, he longed for the outward ordinances, which enabled him more vividly to realize the invisible: see Introd. § 6.

to inquire] Or, "to contemplate." The Hebrew implies delight in contemplating (Ges., Hupf.); there is some authority for another rendering, "to visit every morning:" Del., Rashi, Mendel.

in his temple] Or, "palace." This expression is not restricted to the Solomonian temple; the tabernacle consecrated by the visible symbols of God's Presence is here meant. See note on Ps. v. 7; in the following verse this palace is expressly called a tabernacle, or tent, an appellation not much used by later writers.

5. *his pavilion*] Literally, "booth," constructed of branches of trees, but the word is used of the tabernacle, Ps. lxxvi. 2. The expressions in this verse are figurative, and shew that David's mind dwelt wholly on the spiritual reality which the tabernacle represented. Hence the introduction of the word "rock," which is familiar to David (see note on xviii. 1), but has no special connection with the tabernacle of Jerusalem.

6. *head be lifted up*] Cf. Ps. iii. 3. In this verse the Psalmist undoubtedly predicts a speedy and complete deliverance, and restoration to his home at Jerusalem.

sacrifices of joy] Or, as in the margin, "shouting;" that is, offered with shouts of thankful exultation, or "with the blare of trumpets:" see note on Ps. lxxxix. 15: so vividly he realizes the near triumph.

I will sing] The words in Eph. v. 19 are taken from the LXX. version of this passage.

7—12. As in so many psalms of David, there follows a rapid and complete change of tone. So long as the Psalmist fixes his thoughts wholly on God's grace and promise, he has no feeling but joy and exultation; but when he reverts to his own state he is brought at once to his knees in earnest, almost plaintive prayers.

7. The cry is now for mercy, not for victory. The shadows are falling on David's heart.

my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 † *When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

9 Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD † will take me up.

11 [d] Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in † a plain path, because of † mine enemies.

12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

13 *I had fainted*, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 [e] Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

† heart ... unto ... Let ... face ... thy ..., &c.

† Heb. will gather me.

d Ps. 25. 4 & 86. 11. & 119.

† Heb. a way of plainness.

† Heb. those which observe me.

e Ps. 31. 24 Isai. 25. 9 Hab. 2. 3

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8. The meaning of this beautiful verse is clear, but the construction is difficult. The original runs thus, word for word: "To Thee said my heart, *in answer to Thy command*, 'Seek ye My face;' Thy face, O Lord, will I seek." The Psalmist hears the voice of invitation, his heart accepts and answers it; and, in order to express the completeness and promptitude of his acceptance, he puts the command and answer in direct juxtaposition. In plain unimpassioned prose the thought would be thus expressed: "Seek ye My face," that is the invitation which my heart heard, and answered at once, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The heart pleads the command and invitation: it addresses itself at once to God: this, it says, is what I heard; when I heard, I answered and obeyed.

Seek ye my face] Cf. Ps. xxiv. 6.

9. *far*] This word should be omitted; it is unnecessary, and rather disguises the close connection between this and the preceding verse. The Psalmist comes at once to seek God's face, and implores Him not to hide it. There is a consciousness of something in himself that may cause an alienation, hence the next earnest pleading, "put not away," reject not (the word is emphatic), "in anger Thy servant." The word "servant" (specially used of David, see note on inscription of xviii.) in the original comes last in this clause as a suggestion of hope; then follows the reference to his experience of past mercies, and prayers, which he feels assured cannot be rejected by God his Saviour: observe the reference to *v.* 1.

10. This verse does not imply that David had actually been forsaken by his own father and mother; but simply expresses, in a well-known proverbial form, the thought that even were he forsaken by all who loved him most tenderly God would never give him up. The force and beauty of such an appeal depend upon the feeling that a parent's love is the strongest bond that can bind man to man, yet incomparably weaker than that which binds him to God. Thus Hupfeld, and Calvin, who compares Isai. xlix. 15. Hitzig infers that the father and mother of the Psalmist were yet living.

will take me up] Here, with some inconsistency, the marginal correction suggests "gather," which it rejected in Ps. xxvi. 9, where the same word occurs. Either word expresses the true sense, that God will take up and gather unto Himself that which is abandoned by man.

11. The words "way" and "plain path" probably mean a way of safety and triumph, deliverance and security. The same word for plain, *i.e.* level, is used Ps. xxvi. 12, to which the Psalmist may perhaps refer. See also Isai. xxvi. 7, and Ps. cxliii. 10.

12. *Deliver me not over unto the will*] Cf. Ps. xli. 2; lit. unto the soul, *i.e.* desire, as in xxxv. 25.

mine enemies] See note on *v.* 2.

false witnesses] This may seem applicable to David's early life, when he was calumniated and persecuted by the courtiers of Saul; but the exile of the king was brought about chiefly by the machinations and calumnies of Absalom's supporters.

breathe out cruelty] Or, "violence;" a forcible image not uncommon in classic writers: but see Acts ix. 1.

13. *I had fainted*] These words express the meaning, but the sentence is far more vivid and forcible without them. It is a striking example of the well-known figure, aposiopesis. Dr Kay compares Gen. iii. 22.

to see the goodness] The Hebrew phrase (ראה ב), which is familiar, almost peculiar, to David, means to look with joy and triumph, elsewhere generally upon the defeat of enemies (see note on xxii. 17); but here, more in accordance with his better and deeper feelings, upon the "goodness" of Jehovah. See Exod. xxxiii. 19, to which there is an evident reference. The expression is nearly equivalent to that used above in the fourth verse, where the Hebrew has also the construction just noticed as peculiar to David.

PSALM XXVIII.

1 *David prayeth earnestly against his enemies.* 6 *He blesseth God.* 9 *He prayeth for the people.*

A Psalm of David.

UNTO thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent †to me: [a] lest, *if* thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands ‖toward thy holy oracle.

3 Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, [b] which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief *is* in their hearts.

4 Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

5 Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.

† Heb. *from me.*
[a] Ps. 143. 7.
‖ Or, *towards the oracle of thy sanctuary.*
[b] Ps. 12. 2. Jer. 9. 8.

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in the land of the living] Cf. Ps. cxvi. 9. The expression is held by some critics (Hupf.) to denote simply "in this life," in contradistinction from Sheol, or the state after death; but in the very numerous passages where it is used by the Prophets, especially by Ezekiel (xxvi. 20, xxxii., where it occurs six times), it evidently means the land inhabited by a race living in the fear and in the grace of God; and such appears to be its meaning here. What David longed for, and was now assured of, was restoration to the city of God.

14. *Wait on the LORD*] Cf. Pss. xxxvii. 34, xl. 1, cxxx. 5; Prov. xx. 22; Isai. xxv. 9.

be of good courage] Or, "be firm, and He will strengthen thy heart." The Psalmist is sure of the result. Cf. Deut. xxxi. 7, where Moses addresses these words to Joshua, about to enter the promised land. David had that example before him, and could therefore wait with certainty of victory. From first to last his feelings are those of a hero, depending wholly on God, and therefore full of hope.

PSALM XXVIII.

The language, tone of thought and feeling in this psalm, indicate circumstances similar to those of the one immediately preceding. The Psalmist is in great danger, his supplications are earnest and plaintive, but, as in that, and in others, of the same general character. The transition from prayer to blessing is sudden and complete; no doubt or fear remains, the future triumph is realized for the anointed king, and the psalm concludes with a hopeful intercession for the people. It is the prayer of a king.

The psalm has three strophes, of two, three, and four verses, thus increasing in length: see Introduction, Appendix.

1. *silent to me*] Or, "from me," as in the margin, a pregnant construction common in Hebrew; involving two prayers, that God would not withhold an answer, nor turn away from His servant.

go down into the pit] *i.e.* the grave, or Sheol, the abode of the departed, but regarded in the gloomier aspect as the place where men are cast for their sins; it is not, however, equivalent to hell. David does not realize it as a state of torment, but of forgetfulness, the land where all things are forgotten, where sinners are lost without hope.

2. *lift up my hands*] Prayers were offered by the Hebrews, as by most ancient peoples, and still by Orientals, with uplifted hands, outspread as to receive God's gifts. Cf. Exod. ix. 29; Lam. ii. 19; Ps. cxli. 2.

toward] The worshipper turned naturally towards the place where the Lord marked His Presence. From this and other verses it appears that the custom, afterwards universal, was already adopted, viz. that of turning towards the Holy City, and in intention towards the sanctuary, even when absent from Jerusalem.

oracle] By the oracle there is no doubt that David denotes the "Holy of Holies," whether the Hebrew word means "oracle" (from *dabar*, speak), as was formerly held, or "farthest, *i.e.* western recess of the tabernacle," as most critics now take it. The word occurs elsewhere only in Kings and Chronicles. It must, however, be remembered that the outward act was but symbolical, and that the king may have simply held up his hands and addressed his prayers towards heaven as the true abode shadowed forth by the earthly sanctuary.

3. *Draw me not*] The figure is taken from a hunter drawing his prey by a cord, or in a net. Cf. Ps. x. 9. Thus in the book of Job, xxiv. 22, God is said to draw the mighty with His power. The imminence of some wide-spreading judgment is denoted.

5. *Because they regard not*, &c.] The root of wickedness is thus, in accordance with all the teaching of the Old and New Testaments, declared to be an evil heart of unbelief. By the works of the Lord, and the operations of His hands, the Psalmist denotes especially the

6 Blessed *be* the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

7 The LORD *is* my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

8 The LORD *is* ‖ their strength, and he *is* the † saving strength of his anointed.

‖ Or, *his strength.* † Heb. *strength of salvations.*

9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: ‖ feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

‖ Or, *rule.*

PSALM XXIX.

1 David exhorteth princes to give glory to God, 3 by reason of his power, 11 and protection of his people.

A Psalm of David.

GIVE unto the LORD, O † ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

† Heb. *ye sons of the mighty.*

2 Give unto the LORD † the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD ‖ in the beauty of holiness.

† Heb. *the honour of his name.* ‖ Or, *in his glorious sanctuary.*

3 The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: the God of glory thun-

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providential dealings and judicial interventions of God. The denial of a special providence is a characteristic mark of infidelity.

destroy] Literally, shatter, as a house in ruins.

build them up] This may mean simply, restore them after their total ruin, but the words seem to apply specially to Absalom, whose object was to found a dynasty, or in Hebrew idiom, a house: see Exod. i. 21.

6. *he hath heard*] The prayer brings the pledge of fulfilment in the complete assurance of divine favour. The supposition that David received an answer from the "oracle," or that he added these verses after deliverance from danger, rests upon a misapprehension; devout prayer and certainty of God's favour are inseparable; the clouds which hang over the divine presence are dispersed by the breath of prayer.

8. *their strength*] The strength of His people, not "his strength," as in the margin.

saving strength] The words are singularly emphatic, "strength of salvations," implying that all forms of salvation are derived to the nation through the anointed king, who thus stands out as the great type of the Saviour.

9. *feed them*] Or, **tend them**. God is represented as the shepherd of Israel; the word rendered "lift up" means bear them as a shepherd bears the lambs in his arms; see Isai. xl. 11, xlvi. 3, and lxiii. 9.

PSALM XXIX.

David, as he kept his father's flock at Bethlehem (1 S. xvi. 11), may have witnessed such a storm of thunder, lightning, and rain as is here painted; gathering round the summit of Hermon in the north, and shaking, at the last, the wilderness of Kadesh in the south. The peak of Hermon can be seen, almost through the whole extent of the promised land, to the Valley of the Dead Sea (Dean Stanley's 'S. and P.' p. 395; Thomson's 'L. and B.' p. 611). It is naturally introduced on this account, or as the representative of a mountain range: Kadesh (Note 1), towards Egypt, as a well-known, distant, and awful wilderness.

See a description, in Wilson's 'Travels,' of a storm at Baalbek (Note 2), and in Stanley's 'Jewish Church' (Vol. I. p. 149, 1st ed.), of a thunderstorm at Sinai.

The LXX. add to the title a phrase, ἐξοδίου σκηνῆς, which seems to indicate that the psalm was sung (Lev. xxiii. 42) on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles. In the modern synagogues it is appointed for the first day of Pentecost.

1. *Give unto the LORD*, &c.] The angels round the Throne of Jehovah, Isai. vi. 3, are invited to mark His work, and to pay to Him fitting reverence (comp. Job i. 6, 7; Ps. ciii. 20; and *v.* 9 of this psalm). The phrase rendered *O ye mighty* (marg. sons of the mighty) occurs also in Ps. lxxxix. 6, and is most suitably interpreted there, as here, by "angels." But many commentators interpret "mighty men," which also gives an excellent sense: the mighty ones of earth are then called upon to see the work of God, and their own littleness in comparison with it.

The version of the Prayer-book, "Bring unto the Lord, O ye mighty, bring young rams unto the Lord," is from the LXX. and Vulgate, which read "Bring unto the Lord, O ye sons of God, bring unto the Lord young rams." The Syriac version also renders, "Bring unto the Lord young rams." There is no ground for doubting the correctness of the reading from which our translation is derived; and a probable conjecture may be formed as to the origin of the varieties of rendering in the above-mentioned translations. See Note 3.

2. *in the beauty of holiness*] *i.e.* in vestments suited to holy service. See Ps. xcvi. 9; 1 Chro. xvi. 29; also 2 Chro. xx. 21; Note 4: also Exod. xxviii. 2. The priests and Levites in Jehovah's sanctuary on earth attired themselves, on special occasions, in

dereth: the LORD *is* upon [1]many waters.

[1] Or, *great waters.*

4 The voice of the LORD *is* [†]powerful; the voice of the LORD *is* [†]full of majesty.

[†] Heb. *in power.* [†] Heb. *in majesty.*

5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and [a]Sirion like a young unicorn.

[a] Deut. 3. 9.

7 The voice of the LORD [†]divideth the flames of fire.

[†] Heb. *cutteth out.*

8 The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds [1]to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple [1]doth every one speak of *his* glory.

[1] Or, *to be in pain.* [1] Or, *every whit of it uttereth*, &c.

10 The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

11 The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

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suitable vestments to do Him service; so the angels are bidden to make a similar preparation. The meaning of the words explained as above, "in vestments suited," &c. seems also probable from Ps. cx. 3.

3. *The voice of the LORD*, &c.] After the preparation (*vv.* 1 and 2), the angels looking on and wondering, the voice of God is heard afar off in the highest heavens. The thunder first mutters *upon the waters*, or *upon many waters*, *i.e.* above the waters of the firmament, where the palace of the Most High is fixed; Ps. civ. 3. See also Gen. i. 7; Ps. xviii. 11.

4. *The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty*] The voice of Jehovah comes nigher and nigher! It is repeated twice, and we hear it twice, "in power," and "majesty" (as in the marg.), before it descends and shakes terribly the earth.

5, 6. *The voice of the LORD*, &c.] The lightning falls and destroys the pride of Lebanon, the cedars which God planted, Ps. civ. 16. The rolling thunder shakes the huge mountains—we almost see them shaking—to their foundations. Lebanon skips like a calf: Sirion (or Hermon, Deut. iii. 9) like a **young bull**. See Note Num. xxiii. 22.

The suffix "them," in *v.* 6, probably applies to the mountains which follow: in which case the stop should be at "Lebanon;"

"He maketh them to skip; as a calf Lebanon,
Sirion as a young bull."

Thunder and lightning and the roar of the tempest are all expressed in the voice of God.

7. *The voice of the LORD*, &c.] The lightning, implied in its effects in *v.* 5, is now *seen*, following the thunder in flashes of (forked) flame. Cf. Ov. 'Met.' II. 848; Sen. 'H. Œt.' 17. The abruptness of the words, and measure of the verse in the original, seem to place its zigzag before the eye. See Note 5.

8, 9. *The voice of the LORD*, &c.] The hinds (Note 6), through terror and affright, bring forth their young before the time (see Plutarch 'Sympos.' IV., Quæst. 2; Pliny, 'N. H.' VIII. 47): the forests are stripped of bark and branches: and everywhere in God's temple of heaven and earth (see *v.* 1) a voice is raised, singing "Glory to Him that reigneth." The literal rendering of the last clause of the verse is "and everywhere in His Temple (one) crying Glory:" the participle expressing that the voice is heard whilst the tempest rages.

The deadly terror of the hinds suggests the terror of animated nature: the baring (see Note 7) of the forest (*v.* 9) completes the picture of inanimate nature—mountain (*vv.* 5 and 6), desert (*v.* 8), and forest, shaken and shattered; and the voice (*v.* 9) proclaims that all is done in mercy. The repetition of the voice again and again expresses the fury of the storm; the number (7) of repetitions recalls Rev. x. 3, and other places of Scripture.

10. *The LORD sitteth upon the flood*] Or lit. "Jehovah sits over (ruling and moderating) the flood," &c. A vast deluge of rain which accompanies the tempest (see the description quoted from Wilson, Note 2, below) is intimated by the word used commonly to designate the great deluge, Gen. vi. 17. But Jehovah rules it; and is, always, a King, sitting on His throne for ever. It seems abrupt and too elliptical, to translate "The Lord sat by the flood," *i.e.* "the great deluge" (as many critics do), and to leave the connection of the word with the description of the psalm to be inferred. The concluding verse, which is the point of the psalm, suggests a topic of consolation. Jehovah, Who rules the storm, and is mighty and terrible to strike, protects His people (see the preceding psalm, *v.* 8), and is mighty to save.

NOTES on Psalm XXIX.

1. Kadesh (see Gen. xiv. 7). The messengers were sent out from Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran, to spy out the land (Num. xiii. 26). The report of the messengers terrified the people (xiii. 28, &c.), and Moses sent out messengers from "Kadesh, in the desert of Zin," to ask a passage through Edom (Num. xx. 1). These two places are the same; Paran and Zin are the same vast wilderness—Paran to the south, Zin to the north, and Kadesh between them. The wilderness was great and terrible (Deut. i. 19).

2. Wilson's 'Travels,' quoted by Tholuck p. 146. "I was here overtaken by a storm, as if all the floodgates of heaven were opened; it came down in a moment, and raged with such fury that you would have imagined the end of all things come. A horrible darkness covered the whole land, the rain poured down in rivers, and dashing along the sides of the mountains, enveloped them and everything in an impenetrable mist and horror." Dr Stewart ('Tent and Khan,' pp. 139, 140) describes thus a thunderstorm at Sinai: "Every bolt, as it burst with the roar of a cannon, seemed to awake a series of distant echoes on every side. They swept like a whirlwind among the higher mountains, becoming faint as some mighty peak intervened, and bursting with undiminished volume through some yawning cleft, till the very ground trembled with the concussion. It seemed as if the mountains of the whole peninsula were answering one another in a chorus of the deepest bass. Ever and anon a flash of lightning dispelled the pitchy darkness, and lit up the tent as if it had been day; then, after the interval of a few seconds, came the peal of thunder, bursting like a shell, to scatter its echoes to the four quarters of the heavens, and overpowering for a moment the loud howlings of the wind." See also the image of a furious rain, Matt. vii. 27.

3. The words of the LXX. version are, *ἐνέγκατε τῷ Κυρίῳ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ, ἐ. τ. Κ. υἱοὺς κριῶν*: the Vulgate reads, "Afferte Domino, filii Dei, afferte Domino filios arietum." The Syriac translator must have read בְּנֵי אֵילִים, instead of בְּנֵי אֵלִים. Probably אֵילִים ("rams") was first introduced as a marginal correction of אֵלִים ("mighty ones"), then crept into the text, and was combined with the true reading in the text from which the LXX. translated.

4. The Hebrew phrase in 2 Chro. xx. 21 is rendered in A. V. *Singers that should praise the beauty of holiness*, and so in many versions. But most recent expositors render "in the beauty of holiness," and explain as above. Hupfeld renders the verse of the psalm, "Worship the Lord in (His) glorious majesty," regarding the phrase בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ as describing the Attributes of God, *i.e.* Glory, Honour, Holiness. It is noticeable that "dress" or "vestment," anyhow, is implied only, not expressed.

5. The meaning is plain: *The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire: i.e.* "the voice of the Lord hurls a scathing flame of forked fire." The exact import of the word which the A.V. renders *divideth* is doubtful: in Isai. x. 15 it means "cuts" as with an axe. The rendering of Vatabl., with which agree the Syr., Chald., etc., "Dissectas, *i.e.* flammas, ejaculat," seems to agree with the A. V. The marginal rendering "cutteth out," with which agree Calv., Kay, etc., conveys the idea that the voice "cuts out" the flame as a spark is cut out of stones: Deut. viii. 9. The LXX. and Vulg., "cuts through a flame of fire."

6. The place of Plut. is, *Καὶ γὰρ τὰ θρέμματα διδάσκουσι βροντῆς γενομένης οἱ ποιμένες εἰς ταὐτὸ συνθεῖν καὶ συννεύειν· τὰ γὰρ σποράδην ἀπολειφθέντα διὰ τὸν φόβον ἐκτιτρώσκει*, *i.e.* "Shepherds accustom their flocks in a thunderstorm to keep together, and put their heads in the same direction; for such as are left alone and separated from the rest, through terror cast their young." The place of Pliny is, "tonitrua solitariis ovibus abortus inferunt; remedium est congregare eas, ut cœtu juventur." The original authority for this is evidently Aristotle ('H. A.' IX. 3, 4, p. 311), *Διδάσκουσι δ' οἱ ποιμένες τὰ πρόβατα συνθεῖν, ὅταν ψοφήσῃ: ἐὰν γὰρ βροντήσαντος ὑπολειφθῇ τις καὶ μὴ συνδράμῃ, ἐκτιτρώσκει ἐὰν τύχῃ κύουσα.*

7. The word *discovereth* in *v.* 9 seems taken from the LXX. and Vulg. versions; which read respectively, *ἀποκαλύψει δρυμούς*, and *revelabit condensa*. The probable meaning of the unusual Hebrew word יֶחֱשֹׂף is "strips," *i.e.* of "leaves" and "branches," or of "bark" (Joel i. 7).

PSALM XXX.

1 *David praiseth God for his deliverance.* 4 *He exhorteth others to praise him by example of God's dealing with him.*

A Psalm *and* Song *at* the dedication of the house of David.

I WILL extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

2 O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

3 O Lord, thou hast brought up my soal from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

4 Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks [1]at the remembrance of his holiness.

5 For [1]his anger *endureth but* a

[1] Or, *to the memorial.* [1] Heb. *there is but a moment in his anger.*

PSALM XXX.

This psalm expresses deep thankfulness for deliverance from a danger, which had brought the writer nigh unto death, 1, 3; it had been accompanied, probably, by bodily, 2, certainly by severe mental, 7, suffering; and had been preceded by a state of prosperity, 6, 7, during which the Psalmist had given way to spiritual temptation, 6: the deliverance was granted in answer to earnest prayer, 8—10, and celebrated by festivities, 11, and public thanksgiving, 12. These points stand out clearly, and accord with the inscription, which states that it was written by David, as a hymn to be used at the dedication of the house. The internal evidences of Davidic authorship are strong, both as regards style and tone of thought; its exceeding beauty is recognized by Ewald, who calls it a model hymn of thanksgiving, composed in the best age of Hebrew poetry for recitation in the temple. Two events in David's history claim attention. (1) The dedication of the site of the temple in Mount Moriah, when David said, "This is the house of the Lord God," 1 Chro. xxii. 1. This has in its favour the Jewish tradition, the natural meaning of "dedication" (the corresponding words in Greek ἐνεκαινίσθη, ἐγκαινισμός are used in 1 Macc. iv. 54, 56, at the reconsecration of the altar of incense), and the attendant circumstances of great prosperity, presumption, punishment, and suffering: the objection that David was not smitten by the pestilence seems to have little weight, considering the intense agony and prostration of spirit which must have brought him nigh unto death during its ravages. (2) Some critics, however, hold that David wrote the psalm to celebrate the erection of a fortified palace on Mount Zion, which he acknowledged as a sign "that the Lord had established him king over Israel." The word dedication may properly be used of a house; cf. Deut. xx. 5. Thus Del., Moll, Perowne: but that event was not preceded by affliction, mental or bodily, which could suggest such language as pervades this psalm. The word "house" is not decisive, since it is used absolutely of the palace in the official title of the chief officer who was "over the house" (compare the Egyptian *mer-per*, "master of the house," *i.e.* of the palace; *per-ao*, "the great house," *i.e.* the palace): but it applies even more naturally to the abode of God on Moriah, called "the mountain of the house." In the Jewish ritual this psalm is used on the festival which commemorates the dedication of the temple: a custom of great antiquity noted in the Talmud: see Delitzsch. The inscription should, probably, be rendered, A psalm, a hymn for the dedication of the house by David.

The structure is regular: four strophes each of three verses.

1. *I will extol thee*] Thus Exod. xv. 2; Ps. xxxiv. 3, and xcix. 5, 9; where A. V. has "exalt." The word is here used with special reference to God's dealings with the Psalmist.

hast lifted me up] The expression is exactly equivalent to "thou hast brought up my soul," *v.* 3. It implies deliverance from a depth of misery. Thus the ancient versions. Hupfeld shews that the meaning "to draw up from a well" (upon which Hitzig relies as an argument that Jeremiah was the writer) is secondary. The word is peculiar, but expresses a feeling deeply seated in David's heart. See Ps. xviii. 46, 48, 49.

my foes] Cf. Pss. xxv. 2, xxxv. 19, 24. Though suitable to other occasions, this has a special fitness in reference to 2 S. xxiv. 14.

2. *thou hast healed me*] The word may apply, as in Ps. vi. 2, to mental affliction, the prostration of sympathy with suffering, caused by the Psalmist's sin. The reference, however, to a sickness all but mortal may be borne out by other passages which speak of fearful maladies, apparently at the time immediately preceding Absalom's revolt; see notes on Pss. xxxii., xxxviii., xli.

3. *kept me alive*] Or, "quickened me," restored me to life. The construction of the next clause is doubtful; the A. V. has the support of able critics, but the rendering may be "from those who go down to the pit," thus corresponding exactly with Ps. xxviii. 1. In this case the meaning would be that while others are perishing God has preserved the Psalmist's life.

4. *Sing unto the Lord*] David, as is his wont, see Ps. ix. 11, calls on his people, those especially who have experienced God's favour and grace (for such is the meaning of the word "saints;" see an excellent note by Hupfeld on iv. 3), to join in psalmody; the Hebrew word applies specially to public celebrations.

at the remembrance] Or, "to the memorial of His holiness," sc. "to His holy Name;" cf. Exod. iii. 15: "This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." So nearly all modern critics; the reference to Exodus is here obvious, and it is customary in David's psalms.

5. *For his anger*, &c.] Lit. for a mo-

moment; in his favour *is* life: weeping may endure †for a night, but †joy *cometh* in the morning.

† Heb *in the evening.* † Heb. *singing.*

6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

7 LORD, by thy favour thou hast †made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, *and* I was troubled.

† Heb. *settled strength for my mountain.*

8 I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.

9 What profit *is there* in my blood, when I go down to the pit? [a] Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

[a] Ps. 6. 5. & 88. 11. & 115. 17.

10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

12 To the end that ‖*my* glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

‖ That is, my *tongue*, or, my *soul*.

PSALM XXXI.

1 *David shewing his confidence in God craveth his help.* 7 *He rejoiceth in his mercy.* 9 *He prayeth in his calamity.* 19 *He praiseth God for his goodness.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

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ment (passeth) **in His anger, life in His favour,** *i.e.* God's anger against the man of prayer (see *v.* 2) is momentary: His grace is life-long.

weeping, &c.] The expression is highly figurative: "at eventide weeping comes to pass the night, but with the morning comes joy;" lit. "a shout of joy." So sudden is the change from night-long weeping to rapturous joy at the assurance of forgiveness. Compare Job xxxiii. 26, where the words "be favourable" and "joy" are precisely similar.

6. *And in my prosperity*] The transition of thought is very distinctly marked in the Hebrew. **And I,** *i.e.* as for me, **I said in my prosperity, I shall not be moved for evermore.** He recognizes the immediate cause of his affliction. He had been guilty of presumption (see Ps. xix. 13, and compare 2 S. xxiv. 3 and 17); and had used the very words which he takes as specially characteristic of the wicked, Ps. x. 6. The word rendered "prosperity" includes outward peace and success, such as led to David's special fault in numbering the people, and an inward feeling of self-complacency and careless ease; cf. Prov. i. 32.

7. *LORD, by thy favour*, &c.] Or, **O Lord, in Thy favour Thou hadst established strength for my mountain.** This is taken figuratively by many commentators (*e.g.* Rashi, Aben Ezra, Rosen., Hupf., Perowne), but it is far more natural to understand it of Mount Zion, which David had fortified, and the strength of which he now attributes to the favour of God; see 2 S. v. 9—11. The word "establish" has a special reference to the permanence of the strength thus assured. See 1 K. xv. 4; Ps. xviii. 33, where A. V. has "set me upon my high places."

thou didst hide thy face] Deut. xxxi. 17; Ps. civ. 29.

troubled] The Hebrew word denotes the extremity of dismay, as in Ps. vi. 2, 3, where A.V. has "vexed" and "sore vexed." It is used to describe Saul's feelings when he heard his doom, 1 S. xxviii. 21. Compare David's own words, 2 S. xxiv. 10, 14, 17.

8. *I cried to thee, O LORD*] Thus in the passage just quoted David's heart smote him; "and David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly."—*I made supplication;* "and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant," ib.: the form of the Hebrew verb and its derivation are emphatic, "supplex oravi ad impetrandam gratiam," Ros.

9. *my blood*] The expression is equivalent to death by a sudden blow, or sickness inflicted by God's anger: thus Job xvi. 18.

go down to the pit] This refers to *v.* 3; where, however, a different word is used for "pit:" here the meaning, though disputed, is connected with "corruption."

Shall the dust praise thee?] See Ps. vi. 5. Dust is often used as a synonym for the grave (see critical Note on Job xix.): here it evidently means the body in its state of dissolution; dust returned to dust. The word limits the assertion to the body; and with that limitation the expression is applicable to the Christian, who knows that when restored to life his body will be a spiritual body, to which the term "dust" cannot apply. Our Lord teaches us, "the night cometh, when no man can work."

11. *into dancing*] This must apply to a public celebration, praise and thanksgiving, such as took place at the exodus, see Exod. xv. 20; at the installation of the ark, 2 S. vi. 14, 16; and on all great occasions of thanksgiving; cf. Ps. cxlix. 3; 1 S. xviii. 6; Jer. xxxi. 4.

sackcloth] See 1 K. xx. 31. On no occasion could it be worn more fitly than during the pestilence caused by the king's sin.

12. *glory*] See note on xvi. 9.

[a] Ps. 22. 5. Isai. 49. 23.

IN [a] thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.

2 Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou † my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.

† Heb. *to me for a rock of strength.*

3 For thou *art* my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.

4 Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou *art* my strength.

5 [b] Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

[b] Luke 23. 46.

6 I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.

7 I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities;

8 And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.

PSALM XXXI.

This psalm abounds in reminiscences of others which are undoubtedly Davidic, and it is attributed by many to the time of his persecution by Saul; but the tone of general languor and depression (see 9—13, 22), the description of his extreme and imminent danger, *v.* 2; of the devices and conspiracies against his life, 4, 8, 15, 18; of the reproach, contempt, and slander to which he was exposed; of the alienation of his friends and neighbours; and more especially of his mental and bodily affliction, and of "his deep consciousness of sin" (*v.* 10), which brought on such visitations, belong rather to a later period of his life, and agree very closely with the circumstances of his flight from Absalom. The urgency of his prayers, and the grounds on which he still rests his hopes, point to the same conclusion; he recalls the old epithets by which he had so often expressed his reliance on God; appeals to his constancy in the faith (1, 6), and his hatred of idolaters (6); and, notwithstanding all appearances, declares his firm belief in the overthrow of his enemies, and in his deliverance and restoration.

Ewald and Hitzig attribute the psalm to Jeremiah, on account of some obvious coincidences of style, which, however, are sufficiently accounted for by that prophet's well-known habit of using older compositions, especially the Psalter. See Introd. to Job. § 7. There are expressions in the psalm throughout which are wholly inapplicable to Jeremiah, *e.g.* 10, 21, where see notes. The supposition that it belongs to the time of the exile rests on no substantial grounds; and is, indeed, opposed to internal and external evidence.

1. *ashamed*] In the usual sense, disappointed, put to shame by the prostration of my hopes, and the success of my enemies; see xxv. 2.

2. *strong rock*] Lit. "rock of stronghold," or "hill-fort," or "rock;" see note on xviii. 2.

house of defence] Literally, "a house of fortresses;" strongly fortified on every side.

3. *my rock and my fortress*] Or, **my cliff and my fortress;** as in Ps. xviii. 2, David accumulates epithets. "Cliff" and "rock" differ; the former expressing steepness, the other strength.

4. *the net*] This may apply with equal force to the danger of capture by Saul, or to the devices of Ahithophel; cf. Ps. ix. 15.

my strength] **stronghold,** as in *v.* 2.

5. *Into thine hand*] The adoption of these words by our blessed Lord (see marginal reference) gives a peculiar interest to the psalm, which, if not predictive, is throughout typical; and has, therefore, a true prophetic character. The recorded instances of Christians who have used these words in dying are numerous, from St Polycarp and Basil onwards, representing "how many millions of unrecorded cases!" Kay.

O LORD God of truth] Or, Jehovah, God of truth; cf. Deut. xxxii. 4.

6. *regard lying vanities*] Or, **observe,** *i.e.* "worship." Lying vanities, or nothingnesses of falsehood, is an epithet properly applicable to idols; but includes all forms of idle superstition, the witchcraft, divinations, and teraphim, of which there are many notices in the age of David. Had the psalm belonged to a later period, especially that of the exile, the notice of idolatrous worship would have been more distinct and specific. The expression here is identical with that used in Jonah ii. 8; unquestionably (Hupf.) taken from this. The word rendered "vanities" means literally empty breath, a light breeze; it is the name Abel, Gen. iv. 2. It is used of idols, Deut. xxxii. 21, to which the Psalmist probably refers; and thrice by Jeremiah, ii. 5, viii. 19, xiv. 22: see also note on 2 K. xvii. 15.

7. *known*] In the true Scriptural sense of knowing as a friend, and approving; see Ps. i. 6.

The construction is rather difficult; probably "Thou hast known (me) in the troubles of my soul" is the true rendering.

8. *set my feet*] Ps. xviii. 33; see note on xxx. 7: each word alludes to other psalms.

9 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, *yea*, my soul and my belly.

10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.

11 I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like †a broken vessel.

† Heb. *a vessel that perisheth.*

13 For I have heard the slander of many: fear *was* on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my God.

15 My times *are* in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

16 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.

17 Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, *and* ‖ let them be silent in the grave.

‖ Or, *let them be cut off for the grave.*

18 Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak †grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

† Heb. *a hard thing.*

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in a large room] *i.e.* space, where the foot may move freely; cf. Ps. iv. 1; Job xxxvi. 16.

9. *mine eye*] See note on vi. 7.

my soul and my belly] By the latter word is meant the inner man, the centre of physical life and of emotions; see note on Job xxxii. 19.

10. *with grief*] Or, "anguish," not the same word as in the preceding verse.

mine iniquity] The confession is explicit. It does not exclude the assertion of integrity in dealings with fellow-men, friends or enemies; but it proves a consciousness of sin, committed and punished, such as is only found in psalms written after the king's great crime. In Ps. xviii. 23, where the expression "mine iniquity" occurs, it is spoken of as an inward temptation, hitherto successfully resisted. It is to be noted that Jeremiah never attributes his sufferings to his own iniquity.

my bones are consumed] See note on Job xx. 11. The expression does not necessarily imply that the disease had actually attacked the bones, but that they were racked by pains; exhausted by the prostration produced, whether by mental or bodily anguish; or, more probably, by the combination of both.

11. *among*] Literally, "from," a word which points to his enemies, such as Ahithophel, as the origin of the reproach. Another preposition in the Hebrew stands before neighbours, viz. "to." The reproach originated with his enemies, but was extended to, and taken up by, his neighbours: so that his acquaintance, those who ought to have known him best, were terrified, and "all forsook him, and fled." Cf. Matt. xxvi. 56; Mark xiv. 50. In this passage the typical character of the psalm is strongly marked.

12. *forgotten...out of mind*] Cf. Deut. xxxi. 21, "forgotten out of mouth."

broken] This expresses the sense correctly. David compares himself to a vessel broken, not merely in danger of being broken. The marginal amendment is unnecessary. A potter's vessel represents fragility and worthlessness, here both ideas are combined; cf. Ps. ii. 9; Isai. xxx. 14; Jer. xix. 11.

13. *slander*] The word denotes calumny creeping and spreading about secretly.

fear was on every side] This expression becomes almost proverbial in Jeremiah (see vi. 25, xx. 3, 10, xlvi. 5, xlix. 29; Lam. ii. 22): it is peculiarly appropriate, as describing the consternation of the king and his friends when the revolt of Absalom broke out.

took counsel] The two words imply a formal meeting of the council of David's enemies, and a crafty plot: just such a combination as we find in 2 S. xvii.

14. *But I*] The original, as elsewhere, marks the introduction of a fresh clause distinctly. "And as for me, I trusted, &c." It is the key-note of the psalm; see *v.* 7.

15. *My times*] All seasons of life with their vicissitudes of weal and woe. The same word is used 1 Chro. xxix. 30, in reference to David's reign.

16. *Make thy face to shine*] See Ps. iv. 6.

17. *let them be silent*] This translation is better than the marginal, "be cut off." The leading thought is that they shall be silenced, and for ever.

18. *grievous things*] Not exactly "a hard thing," as in the margin, but a proud, haughty

[c Isai. 64. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 9.]

19 [c] *Oh* how great *is* thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

20 Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed *be* the LORD: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a [1] strong city.

[1 Or, *fenced city*.]

22 For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

23 O love the LORD, all ye his saints: *for* the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

24 [d] Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

[d Ps. 27. 14.]

PSALM XXXII.

1 *Blessedness consisteth in remission of sins.* 3 *Confession of sins giveth ease to the conscience.* 8 *God's promises bring joy.*

[1 Or, A Psalm of David giving instruction.]

[1] *A Psalm* of David, Maschil.

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thing. The pride (ὕβρις) of David's enemies is a prominent thought, especially in the psalms which speak of Absalom and his abettors. Compare the words of Ahithophel, 2 S. xvii. 1—3. The two words for pride are nearly, but not quite, synonymous; the first is taken from the neck, stiff and thrown back; the other denotes a high and insolent demeanour.

19. *laid up*] Or, **stored up.** This speaks of the goodness in store, as the following clause, "thou hast wrought," of goodness in effect and manifestation before the eyes of men. David thus appeals to faith and experience.

20. *secret of thy presence*] Or, "of Thy face." The light of God's countenance shining on the just not only protects them, but hides them, as the pillar of fire in the wilderness. They are covered as with a mantle of light, and feel that no eye can penetrate the secrecy of their sanctuary; cf. Ps. xxxii. 7.

from the pride] The original word occurs only in this passage. Its meaning is not certain, but probably denotes **conspiracies**, from a root signifying "to bind together." There is no authority for our rendering "pride." The image is distinct: while David prays in God's presence, the conspirators are baffled, unable to find him, much less to succeed in their machinations; cf. 2 S. xvii. 14—22.

a pavilion] Or, "booth," a tent of boughs and leaves, suggesting at once the ideas of protection and refreshment; see Ps. xxvii. 5.

21. *in a strong city*] Or, fenced city. Lit. city of stronghold. It is not quite clear whether this means that God has shewn His kindness by delivering David, and restoring him to a state of security, or by protecting him in a city where he was besieged: in either case the expression may be figurative, but is certainly suggested by actual occurrences. The unsuitableness to Jeremiah is obvious. Delitzsch supposes an allusion to Ziklag, but it is more appropriate to David's position beyond the Jordan, while he was collecting forces to repel the army of Absalom, 2 S. xviii.

22. *in my haste*] The word exactly expresses the state of confused and hurried alarm to which the Psalmist has already alluded; see *v.* 13, and cf. 2 S. xv. 14. The same word is used 1 S. xxiii. 26.

cut off from before thine eyes] That was the most poignant feeling of the exile from the city where the ark was placed. In his banishment, David learned thoroughly to realize the fact of God's omnipresence. The resemblance with xxx. 7, 8 should be noted as a mark of authorship; the difference of expression, "in my haste" and "cut off," indicates different occasions.

23. *the faithful*] The Hebrew word includes trust and stedfastness.

24. See note on Ps. xxvii. 14.

all ye that hope in the LORD] See critical Note on Job xiii. 15, where the same word is used. Hope and trust are the special characteristics of the servant of God; the psalm begins with trust, and ends with hope.

PSALM XXXII.

This psalm has points of resemblance with the preceding, but it was evidently written under different circumstances. In that the Psalmist speaks chiefly of outward calamities, here he dwells altogether on inward and spiritual afflictions. There can be little doubt that it was composed by David very soon after his repentance, when he had time to meditate upon the past and to realize the blessing of forgiveness.

The most characteristic feature is the entire absence of allusion to outer and legal forms: the psalm is peculiarly and thoroughly evangelical: what David learned first in suffering he pours out in spiritual song. Written nearly at the same time with the 51st, but apparently somewhat later, it has been adopted

[a] Rom. 4. 7.

BLESSED *is he whose* [a] transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.

2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 I acknowledged my sin unto

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by the Church as one of the great penitential psalms. It is one of the seven which Augustine is said to have studied incessantly, and to have had written on the wall in front of his death-bed. It is used by the Jews at the close of the service on the Day of Atonement.

The structure is rhythmical, shewing the care which David bestowed upon the composition of a psalm intended to be a model and guide for penitents. There are six strophes, each with two verses; three end with Selah.

of David] Ewald's remarks are important as bearing upon the objections of the very few critics who have questioned the authorship. "The song is manifestly ancient, original throughout, evidencing a strong spirit. Hardly could the inner misery of a lacerated (zerrissenen) heart, together with the higher happiness of one again reconciled and healed, be described with more inwardness, impressiveness, and power than here. The harder the struggle in his heart so much more glorious is the victory, so much more limpid and joyous is the stream of the earnest word. The colour also of the language is Davidic, and there is no reason to doubt that it was sung after the transaction recorded 2 S. xii." Ewald treats Hitzig's objection that David's confession was not spontaneous as of very slight importance. David's conscience was quickened by the prophet's word; and if, as is probable, he composed this psalm some time after his repentance, he was able to trace and describe the inward tragedy through which his soul had passed, and by which it had been purified.

Maschil] Thirteen psalms bear this designation. The meaning is questioned, but the old interpretation, which connects it with the word *askil*, which occurs *v.* 8, "I will instruct thee," is probably correct. A didactic song, intended for instruction; thus Ges. LXX. συνέσεως, Jerome, "eruditio."

1. *transgression*, &c.] The Hebrew abounds in expressions for sin. David in this passage, and in others where he confesses and deplores his guilt (see *v.* 5, and li. 1—5), uses three words, which represent it (1) as an offence against God, "transgression;" (2) as an internal depravity or perversity, "iniquity;" and (3) as a defilement, "sin." For each of these a special remedy is supplied. The *transgression* is a heavy load, which is lifted up and taken away, for such is the meaning of the word rendered "forgiven:" *the sin*, or defilement, "is covered," a legal term, which is often equivalent to atonement; and the *iniquity*, inherent in a sinner, and not wholly eradicated while life continues, is not imputed. David, however, is throughout speaking not of legal acts which represent pardon and atonement, but of the grace which effectually bestows and applies both. Hence St Paul's appropriation of the thought (see marg. ref.), as expressing the inner harmony of spiritual emotions under both dispensations.

2. *imputeth not*] No word could more exactly express the thought. God does not take it into account, it is as though the iniquity were not there at all.

iniquity] This completes the threefold enumeration of sin; it is the evil habit, the state of antagonism to God, which, if imputed, would ensure utter destruction.

no guile] The one condition is that there be no dishonesty, no attempt to disguise, gloss over, extenuate, or justify the sin. The total absence of such a spirit proves that sin, great and deadly as it may be, is a stranger; that though admitted it is not welcomed, that when it is once clearly seen it is hated. David speaks of the first (cf. Gen. iii. 12, 13), the strongest and most enduring temptation of a sinner, and in stating the one condition of pardon he goes to the very root of evil.

3. *my bones*] See notes on Pss. vi. 2 and xxxi. 10. From this verse we learn that the long interval between the seduction of Bathsheba and the mission of Nathan was passed in bitter struggles of conscience, not without severe prostration of bodily powers. It is remarkable that no intimation of this is found in the history; but probably the sickness, of which there are many indications in the psalms, broke out at a later period.

my roaring] See note on Ps. xxii. 1. The cry of bitter anguish does not prove that the conscience is awakened; until that speaks out the roaring is in vain. Dr Kay compares Hosea vii. 14, "they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds:" but in David's case the suffering, though of itself impotent, indicated inward life, and prepared the way for confession.

4. *moisture*] This translation, which has been questioned, is correct. Targ. "my

thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. [b]I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

[b] Prov. 28. 13. Isai. 65. 24. 1 John 1. 9.

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee [†]in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

[†] Heb. *in a time of finding.*

7 [c]Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

[c] Ps. 9. 9.

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: [†]I will guide thee with mine eye.

[†] Heb. *I will counsel thee, mine eye shall be upon thee.*

9 [d]Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

[d] Prov. 26. 3.

10 Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are* upright in heart.

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freshness," or sap. Thus Ew., Hupf. The LXX., Jerome and other ancient versions differ.

5. The transition is described as sudden and complete; conscience once awakened finds no respite, seeks no delay; confession comes at once, at once followed by forgiveness. This accords exactly with the narrative. Nathan asks no more from the king, and at once declares his pardon. Observe that in this verse David again uses the three words of *v.* 1 to denote his sin, together exhausting all aspects, save that of rebellious and impenitent wickedness (Heb. *resha*), from which he is free; see note on Ps. i. 1.

6. *godly*] The word (*hasid*) is chosen, which exactly expresses the condition, one who is loved by God and responds to His love.

in a time] Lit., as in the marg., "in a time of finding," *i.e.* in a time of acceptance, when God is found in answer to prayer, and therefore gracious. Thus all the ancient versions. Compare Isai. xlix. 8 and lv. 6. Dr Kay renders it "at the time of visitation," and refers to Gen. xliv. 16; Num. xxxii. 23: Pss. x. 15, xvii. 3, xxxvi. 2; the sense thus elicited is true and thoroughly scriptural, but the other is generally accepted by critics.

surely] Or, "only:" sc. but this at least is certain.

floods of great waters] *i.e.* overwhelming calamities; a frequent figure of speech, especially suitable in a land subject to sudden inundation; see Ps. xviii. 4.

they shall not come nigh unto him] *i.e.* the waters shall not reach him. Our Prayer-book version suggests a different thought.

7. *hiding place*] See xxxi. 20, where the same word is rendered "the secret."

songs of deliverance] Such as Ex. xv.; Judg. v. For the expression "compass" compare *v.* 10; Ps. v. 12.

8. These words are spoken by the Psalmist in accordance with his pledge given in the first agony of confession, Ps. li. 12, 13. See also Luke xxii. 32, "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." The last clause is correctly rendered in the margin, and means, "I will watch thee closely while counselling thee."

9. *whose mouth*, &c.] The expressions in this verse are obscure, but the general sense is correctly given, excepting in the last clause, "they will not come near to thee." The object of bit and bridle is not to keep the beast from the rider, but to make it obedient, to compel it to go where it is wanted. Man ought to need no such coercion to come near to God. The passage may be translated, "whose adornment is with bit and bridle for curbing, or it will not come nigh thee," *i.e.* which is adorned, but with trappings intended to subdue it, because of its stubbornness and unwillingness to come near its master. See Note below.

10. *Many sorrows*] Inflicted whether in mercy to compel them to come to God (see the last note), or in punishment for invincible obstinacy. LXX. μάστιγες: the Hebrew word applies specially to inflictions, as in Exod. iii. 7.

compass him] Cf. Deut. xxxii. 10.

11. The psalm ends as it begins with a short expression of feeling, more fervid and exulting, as the Psalmist more fully realizes the contrast between the past and the present.

NOTE on PSALM XXXII. 9.

This rendering follows Hupfeld. It seems to express most nearly the sense of an obscure passage. The meaning of עדי in the other passages where it occurs is certainly "ornament;" "trappings" is a proper term applied to a horse or mule. Dr Kay prefers the sense

"gaiety;" but in the passage which he quotes, ciii. 5, the word means appetite, not gaiety, which scarcely suits this or any other passage. The rendering "mouth" is generally abandoned: Ewald, who prefers this meaning, proposes another reading. בלם, ά. λ., is admitted to mean "bind," "curb." The construction of the following clause is harsh; בל requires a finite verb; here, if the reading is correct, it is = בלי (which Hupf. suggests as a probable reading); sc. *no approaching;* קרב with אל certainly means friendly, not hostile approach. The A. V. follows the Rabbins, who were probably misled by the later usage, which confounded אל with על. The LXX. and the Vulg. render it correctly "qui non approximant ad te," Jerome "accedunt."

PSALM XXXIII.

1 *God is to be praised for his goodness,* 6 *for his power,* 12 *and for his providence.* 20 *Confidence is to be placed in God.*

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous: *for* praise is comely for the upright.

2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings.

3 Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

4 For the word of the LORD *is* right; and all his works *are done* in truth.

5 He loveth righteousness and judgment: [a] the earth is full of the [1] goodness of the LORD.

6 [b] By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

[a] Ps. 119. 64.
[1] Or, *mercy.*
[b] Gen. 1. 6, 7.

PSALM XXXIII.

This psalm is not attributed to David, nor are there any certain internal marks to designate either the author, the date, or the occasion of its composition (see however note on *v.* 17). It is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, singularly bright, replete with beautiful imagery, and well adapted for the liturgical services of the temple.

There is no inscription, and in several Hebrew MSS. (8 Kenn., 10 De Rossi) it is joined on to the preceding psalm, probably on account of the close resemblance between the close of the one and the beginning of the other: but in all other points the two psalms represent a different state of mind and of circumstances. Dr Kay regards it as one of the "songs of deliverance" promised in Ps. xxxii. 7. There is, however, no reference in it to deliverance from the penalties due to sin.

The structure of the psalm is regular; it begins and ends with utterances of praise, each consisting of three verses, the intermediate portion of eight strophes, each of two verses: this arrangement appears to be intended for antiphonal recitation.

2. *harp*] The harp (corresponding to the Greek κιθάρα or κινύρα of the LXX.) and the psaltery represent two classes of stringed instruments, distinguished by the arrangement of the strings, the latter played with two hands. The latter half of the verse would be more correctly rendered, "with ten-stringed lute." Two instruments only are mentioned.

3. *a new song*] *i.e.* a song, either used for the first time in public psalmody, or, more probably, fresh from the Psalmist's heart. The expression occurs frequently, and in special connection with thanksgiving for deliverance; Ps. xl. 3, xcviii. 1; Isai. xlii. 10. See also Rev. v. 9, xiv. 3.

loud noise] Of trumpets, cymbals, and loud jubilant shouts; Ps. lxxxvii. 7.

4. *the word of the LORD*] *i.e.* the expression or manifestation of God's will, including all utterances whether in revelation or nature. There is no distinct personification of the Word, but a preparatory stage in the development of that fundamental truth of Christianity is traceable in this psalm; see *v.* 6.

all his works, &c.] Or, "and all His work *is* in truth" or faithfulness.

5. *righteousness and judgment*] The former denotes the essential principle, the second the manifestation in act of God's justice.

is full] Cf. Isai. vi. 3, xi. 9; Hab. iii. 3; Ps. civ. 24.

goodness] Or, graciousness, lovingkindness.

6. The Word of the Lord is the command which called the universe into existence; the Breath is the quickening Spirit which brooded on the abyss, and gave life and form to all things. The reference to Genesis is unmistakeable, but it is remarkable how the Psalmist detaches the two great truths involved, or intimated, in that first word of revelation, and expresses them in terms which find their full explanation in the doctrine of the Trinity. Delitzsch ('Apologetik,' p. 432) remarks, "The New Testament doctrine of the Word incarnate in Christ is here in germ, *im Werden.*" See also Liddon's 'Bampton Lectures,' II. p. 95.

all the host of them] The word "host" (as in Gen. ii. 1) combines the two ideas of multitude and order, and is therefore nearly equivalent to the Greek Cosmos. It declares also

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

9 For he spake, and it was *done;* he commanded, and it stood fast.

10 [c] The LORD † bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

11 [d] The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart † to all generations.

12 [e] Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

c Isai. 19. 3.
† Heb. *maketh frustrate.*
d Prov. 19. 21. Isai. 46. 10.
† Heb. *to generation and generation.*
e Ps. 65. 4. & 144. 15.

13 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

16 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

17 An horse *is* a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by his great strength.

18 [f] Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

19 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

f Job 36. 7. Ps. 34. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 12.

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a truth of most practical importance when the psalm was written, viz. that the objects of the widest spread and most attractive forms of idolatrous worship (see note on Job xxxi. 26) are the creatures and servants of God.

7. *as an heap*] This expression describes the convex surface of the ocean apparently overhanging the plains, but it undoubtedly includes a reference to Exod. xv. 8 and Josh. iii. 13—16. The Hebrew word occurs only in those passages, and in Ps. lxxviii. 13, which is taken from Exodus.

storehouses] The depths are thus represented as depositories of waters which at God's bidding may overflow the earth, whether for purposes of mercy or of judgment; see Job xxxviii. 22, &c.: the practical inference is drawn out in the following verse.

9. *stood fast*] This refers to the permanence of all the works of God in creation. See Ps. cxix. 90, 91.

10. From God's works in creation the Psalmist passes to His manifestations of Himself in history. On the one hand He frustrates all undertakings which are not in accordance with His will; on the other (*v.* 11), He gives eternal effect to His own purposes. The world's history is but a development of the principles which have their abode and origin in God.

the counsel] This shews the antithesis with *v.* 11.

devices] Or, **purposes**.

11. *thoughts*] Or, **purposes**, as in the preceding verse, where the same word is used.

12. Compare Deut. xxxiii. 29, a passage which seems to have been present to the Psalmist's mind.

14. *looketh upon*] The Hebrew word is very rare: in Isai. xiv. 16, where the A.V. has "shall narrowly look upon thee," and in Song Sol. ii. 9, it evidently denotes close inspection. Dr Kay observes that the Rabbinical term (*hashgachah*) for providence is derived from it.

15. *alike*] Or, **altogether**; every heart is fashioned, *i.e.* moulded by Him; derives from Him *all* its faculties and endowments. Hitzig and Hupfeld, followed by Perowne (?), take יחד to mean "pariter," which gives the sense, "He at once mouldeth their hearts and understandeth all their wants. He knows the heart because He formed it."

16. *There is no king*] Or, **The king is not saved**: the Israelite thinks of his own king, and attributes his salvation exclusively to God.

17. *An horse*] Ps. xx. 7; Prov. xxi. 31. These two verses imply that the king has a powerful army, many strong warriors, and a force of cavalry. The psalm must therefore have been written in a prosperous reign, but probably not in David's time, when horses were little, if at all, used in warfare. The whole tone of the psalm seems to fit the reign of Asa or Jehoshaphat. Hitzig recognizes it as a production of the period before the captivity, probably in Josiah's reign, after the defeat of the Scythians. Ewald, on the contrary, places it in the latest group of psalms.

19. *in famine*] A common infliction in those days, but one which would be prominently before the mind of a contemporary of Ahab: see note on *v.* 16.

20 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he *is* our help and our shield.

21 For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

22 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

PSALM XXXIV.

1 David praiseth God, and exhorteth others thereto by his experience. 8 They are blessed that trust in God. 11 He exhorteth to the fear of God. 15 The privileges of the righteous.

A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before ||Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

|| Or, Achish, 1 S. 21. 13.

I WILL bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad.

3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

5 [1]They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.

[1] Or, *They flowed* unto him.

6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

8 O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.

9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is* no want to them that fear him.

10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

11 Come, ye children, hearken un-

PSALM XXXIV.

In the introductory remarks on the 25th psalm the close connection with this psalm has been pointed out. Both are alphabetical psalms, and both have two rather singular deviations from alphabetical order, omitting the sixth letter (*vav*), and adding a verse beginning with the same letter and word (*podeh*). It is attributed to David; it certainly belongs to the writer of that psalm, and it contains nothing in point of style or of tone of thought unworthy of the king. The didactic character may possibly indicate a later period in his life than that referred to in the inscription; but little dependence can be placed upon merely subjective impressions; in fact, the great distress and anxiety of the Psalmist, combined with freedom from all consciousness of deep guilt and fearful transgression, harmonize more entirely with that occasion, than with the circumstances of David's expulsion from his kingdom.

Abimelech] The name of the king was Achish, see marg. This may possibly be a mistake of the writer, who may have quoted from memory; but it is more probable that the king bore two names, the one personal, the other dynastic. In the latter case it would be a strong argument in favour of the inscription, which must have been derived from an independent source, and, in all probability, preserves an ancient tradition.

2. *shall make her boast*] Cf. Ps. xliv. 8; Jer. ix. 24; 1 S. ii. 1; Luke i. 46. The Hebrew word implies grateful exultation, as in Hallelujah.

4. *I sought the LORD*, &c.] Cf. 2 Chro. xv. 2, 4, 15; Jer. xxix. 13; Matt. vii. 7.

5. *looked...were lightened*] This translation is preferable to that given in the margin, and it is adopted by modern commentators. The proposition is general; all, who look to the Lord stedfastly, see and reflect the light of His countenance; compare 2 Cor. iii. 18.

6. *This poor man*] Not merely the Psalmist himself, but any one poor, *i.e.* humble and contrite, believer.

7. *The angel of the LORD*] The mention of one Angel, who is yet represented as encamping around about His servants, directs our thoughts to the Angel of the covenant, the captain of the host of Jehovah (see Josh. v. 14), who with His "holy ones" protects His people on every side; compare Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. The word "encampeth" probably refers to Mahanaim, the two camps, in that passage. See Pusey, 'Daniel,' p. 519. This interpretation is at once the most literal and the most satisfactory. Some commentators take the Angel to be a collective name, but without any sufficient reason, or justification from scriptural usage.

8. *taste*] A word frequently used for personal experience, the knowledge acquired by direct contact; cf. Heb. vi. 4.

10. *young lions*] Types of the cruel and the violent, Ps. xxxv. 17. See note on Job iv 9—11.

to me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 [a] What man *is he that* desireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, that he may see good?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

15 [b] The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

16 The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 *The righteous* cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The LORD *is* nigh † unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth † such as be of a contrite spirit.

19 Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous ‖ shall be desolate.

22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

[a] 1 Pet. 3. 10.
[b] Job 36. 7. Ps. 33. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 12.
† Heb. *to the broken of heart.*
† Heb. *contrite of spirit.*
‖ Or, *shall be guilty.*

PSALM XXXV.

1 *David prayeth for his own safety, and his enemies' confusion.* 11 *He complaineth of their wrongful dealing.* 22 *Thereby he inciteth God against them.*

A Psalm of David.

PLEAD *my cause*, O LORD, with them that strive with me:

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11. *ye children*] An address at once affectionate and authoritative, befitting the father and teacher of the people. Hence its frequent use in the book of Proverbs, and its adoption by our Lord.

12. *that he may see good*] Cf. *v.* 10 and iv. 6.

13. *tongue*] See James iii. 2—10. Sins of the tongue are frequently noted in the book of Proverbs, iv. 24, xii. 13, xxi. 23; the special mention here may refer to the occasion pointed out in the inscription.

14. *pursue it*] Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 20; Prov. xxi. 21; Isai. li. 1; where it is rendered "follow after;" the word implies great exertion and eagerness in the pursuit.

15. The quotation of this verse by St Peter, 1, iii. 12, and the frequent allusions to other parts of the psalm in the New Testament, shew how strong a hold it had upon the national spirit.

16. *the remembrance*] The dread that together with a man's posterity his name and memory should utterly perish is specially characteristic of the Semitic races; it is alluded to with peculiar force in the didactic and lyrical poetry both of the Hebrews and Arabians. Cf. Job xviii. 17, xxxi. 8; Pss. xxi. 10, cix. 13.

17. *The righteous*] It is barely possible that the Psalmist may be speaking of the effect of punishment or warning upon evildoers (see Ps. cvii. 17—21), but our translators were probably right in supplying the words "the righteous" from *v.* 15.

18. *broken*] The two words, "broken" and "contrite," applied severally to the heart and spirit, denote more than sorrow for sin; all that is hard and stubborn in the feelings and mind, all that resists the entrance of grace or its free working, must be broken and crushed in the presence of the Saviour. Cf. li. 17, cix. 16; Prov. xvi. 19, xxix. 23; Isai. lvii. 15, lxi. 1, lxvi. 2.

20. *not one of them is broken*] The passage in St John's Gospel (xix. 33—36) which speaks of our Saviour's exemption from this indignity of crucifixion may possibly refer to this psalm, as well as to Exod. xii. 46. The Psalmist also may have had in mind the typical meaning of that part of the ritual; for the lamb represented innocence and acceptance with God.

21. *Evil shall slay*] Evil is, so to speak, personified; it not only occasions but directly causes death. The sinner is slain by his own crime: he is an unconscious suicide, whatever may be the apparent cause of his destruction. Cf. Ps. vii. 15, 16.

desolate] The margin has "guilty," but the original word includes both the imputation of guilt and its just penalty: "shall be punished," or "condemned," would express the meaning better.

22. *and none*, &c.] Or, **and none shall be condemned of them that trust in Him**. The *last* word in the psalm speaks of faith; here, as throughout the Word of God, the condition and pledge of justification. Cf. lv. 23.

fight against them that fight against me.

2 Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

3 Draw out also the spear, and stop *the way* against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.

4 [a] Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

5 [b] Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase *them*.

6 Let their way be † dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

† Heb. *darkness and slipperiness.*

7 For without cause have they hid for me their net *in* a pit, *which* without cause they have digged for my soul.

8 Let destruction come upon him † at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

† Heb. which *he knoweth not of.*

9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 All my bones shall say, LORD, who *is* like unto thee, which deliver-

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PSALM XXXV.

This psalm probably belongs to the earlier life of David; it is singularly animated; the transitions of thought and feeling are abrupt; prayer, imprecations, expostulations, complaints, and hopeful ejaculations succeed in rapid alternation; the images are vigorous and graphic, but not wrought out in detail; the position is not that of a king, but of a subject, harassed, poor, beset by enemies, liable to judicial persecution; there is no special consciousness of guilt, but perfect confidence in God's righteousness, and in his own: the language also is rugged, with many archaic forms and obscure idioms, the rhythm highly lyrical and full of movement. All these characteristics point to the time when David was pursued by Saul. Köster remarks the similarity of expression in *v.* 1 and 1 S. xxiv. 12, 15. There is an apparent connection between this and the preceding psalm, though they differ exceedingly in tone: they are the only psalms which expressly name the Angel of the Lord.

Hitzig and Ewald assign the psalm to Jeremiah; but the tone is that of a warrior; nor is there any one point incompatible with David's character and position.

The metrical structure is peculiar and highly artistic; three divisions, each ending with ejaculations of thanksgiving; see *vv.* 8, 9, 18, and 27, 28. The first and last divisions consist severally of three strophes, the middle division of four: this presents the schema, 3, 3, 4, | 4, 4, | 4, 3, 3. See Introduction, Appendix, p. 172.

1. *Plead my cause*] The expression belongs properly to judicial proceedings; David is wrongfully accused, and prays to God to be his advocate; but inasmuch as the cause is carried on not in a court of justice but in the battle-field, the advocate must be also a champion, and the images at once pass over into the sphere of warfare. As in all David's earlier poems the representation of the Lord is what is called anthropomorphical; he realizes the manifestation vividly as that of a hero, "a man of war," Exod. xv. 3. Such imagery is characteristic of David; see Ewald's remarks, quoted in the note on iii. 6.

3. *stop*] This translation follows the old versions, it is defended by many commentators (thus Hitz., Kay), and gives a good clear sense; but, on the whole, it seems more probable that the word rendered "stop" means "a battle-axe." The Psalmist, as is not unusual with David (see *e.g.* Ps. xviii.), exhausts all the imagery which belongs to his conception of the Divine manifestation.

4. *seek after my soul*] See note on 1 S. xx. 1, where the frequent recurrence of this expression in Davidic psalms is noticed.

5, 6. The Psalmist represents his foes' discomfiture under two figures; the first taken from common experience, but with the introduction of a striking image, which raises it into the higher sphere of poetry. As they are scattered in a confused rout, utterly unresisting, like the light chaff in the windy winnowing field, the Angel of the Lord, the defender of the pious (Ps. xxxiv. 7), **strikes** (not *chases*) each in turn with his strong arm, and throws him down. They seek safety in flight, but the roads are dark and slippery; they stumble, are pursued, overtaken, and fall under the blows of the mighty Being whose wrath they have provoked.

6. *slippery*] "The tracks in the limestone hills of Palestine are often worn as smooth as marble; cf. Ps. lxxiii. 18." Kay.

7. The arrangement of this verse is clearer with a slight transposition, "Without cause they have hid for me a net, without cause they have digged a pit for my soul." Thus the Syriac, and the generality of modern critics; see Hupfeld's note.

est the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

11 †False witnesses did rise up; †they laid to my charge *things* that I knew not.

† Heb. *Witnesses of wrong.*
† Heb. *they asked me.*

12 They rewarded me evil for good *to* the †spoiling of my soul.

† Heb. *depriving.*

13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I ‖humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

‖ Or, *afflicted.*

14 I †behaved myself †as though *he had been* my friend *or* brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth *for his* mother.

† Heb. *walked.*
† Heb. *as a friend, as a brother to me.*

15 But in mine †adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: *yea*, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew *it* not; they did tear *me*, and ceased not:

† Heb. *halting.*

16 With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 Lord, how long wilt thou look

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10. *All my bones*] The bones are regarded in Hebrew physiology as the seat of the most acute sensations, whether of pain or pleasure; see note on Ps. vi. 2.

the poor] As an epithet of spiritual poverty and deep humility it would be suitable to the king, and is often used by David in his later psalms; but joined with "needy" it rather points to his early life. See, however, Ps. lxxxvi. 1.

11. *False witnesses*] Or, "malignant witnesses."

they laid to my charge] The marginal translation is accurate, but the text expresses the meaning; asking, or demanding, in a court of justice is a legal term, and involves a charge.

12. *to the spoiling*] Lit. "bereavement to my soul," *i.e.* I am left alone, like an orphan, without a helper, friend, or advocate. Such was David's position in his flight, separated from his wife, his friend Jonathan, and his parents. This isolation is a strong appeal to Him who is a Father to the fatherless, and will not leave His people (ὀρφανούς) orphans. Cf. John xiv. 18.

13. *when they were sick*] This may express the Psalmist's ready sympathy with his friends in their affliction; but the words have a peculiar force and propriety if referred to his feeling for Saul, labouring under the most terrible of all maladies; cf. 1 S. xvi. 14, xviii. 10; Job xxx. 25.

with fasting] Fasting is conjoined with prayer in numberless passages, both as preparing the spirit for near communion with God, and as expressing grief and sympathy.

my prayer returned] The exact meaning of this expression is somewhat doubtful. The prayer goes forth from the bosom, in tender sighs or deep groans, but its effect depends on the inner state of those on whose behalf it is offered: if they are fit objects of God's favour it brings a blessing upon them; if not, it is lost so far as regards them; but inasmuch as it cannot be ineffectual it comes back to the offerer, bringing to him an assurance of spiritual union with God. This seems to be the meaning of other passages of similar character; see Matt. x. 13; Luke x. 6. Some interpreters hold that the verse simply describes the position of an earnest supplicant, seated on the ground, his head bent down, pouring the prayers into the bosom, unheard by any save God. Thus Elijah, 1 K. xviii. 42.

14. *I behaved myself*] The margin has "walked," but the text gives the sense.

I bowed down heavily] With downcast head and drooping gait, or with an even more forcible meaning, "lying down in the dust," as one who mourns his nearest and dearest; such were ever the outward demonstrations of woe in the East.

mother] The climax should be noted, friend, brother, mother.

15. *adversity*] Or, **in my fall.** The word implies a sudden slip and overthrow, an expression which applies with perfect propriety to David's position when Saul became his enemy; see 1 S. xviii. 29.

the abjects] Or, "slanderers." The meaning of the original word, which occurs nowhere else, is doubtful. It appears to denote smiters, sc. with the tongue. Jer. percutientes; LXX. μάστιγες; Symm. πλῆκται.

and I knew it not] Or, "whom I knew not;" persons beneath my notice; cf. Ps. ci. 4. Some commentators suppose it to mean "although I was conscious of no sin," referring to *v.* 11; but the former meaning suits the context, and is more natural.

they did tear] Job xvi. 9, where the same word occurs, as here, not followed by an objective case.

16. *hypocritical mockers*] The expression in the original is very peculiar. Literally, "profane jesters (or railers) of cakes," *i. e.* men who make profane jests for the sake of a cake. It describes a class of parasites well known to the classical reader, *gnathones*, currying favour by profane or licentious jests, and

on? rescue my soul from their destructions, †my darling from the lions.

18 [e]I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among † much people.

19 Let not them that are mine enemies † wrongfully rejoice over me: *neither* let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

20 For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against *them that are* quiet in the land.

21 Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, *and* said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen *it*.

22 *This* thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.

23 Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, † Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.

† Heb. *Ah, ah, our soul.*

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify *themselves* against me.

27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour † my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

† Heb. *my righteousness.*

28 And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

PSALM XXXVI.

1 *The grievous estate of the wicked.* 5 *The excellency of God's mercy.* 10 *David prayeth for favour to God's children.*

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David the servant of the LORD.

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rewarded by a share of their patron's dainties. David had doubtless frequently been the object of such gibes at the table of Saul, after his loss of favour.

gnashed, &c.] Cf. xxxvii. 12; Job xvi. 9.

17. *my darling*] See note on Ps. xxii. 20.

18. *much people*] The marg. "strong" is accurate; but a strong people means "numerous," and is equivalent to "great" in the preceding clause; thus Gen. xviii. 18.

19. *wrongfully*] The true sense of "falsely:" the marginal amendment is unnecessary. The rejoicing is not feigned, but it is without just cause; thus Ps. xxxviii. 19.

wink with the eye] A gesture of mockery and mutual concert between the Psalmist's enemies; cf. Prov. vi. 13, x. 10.

21. *opened their mouth*] Either, as Hupfeld takes it, like wild beasts ready to devour the prey; cf. Ps. xxii. 13; or, more probably, with scornful laughter.

24. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 1.

25. *so would we have it*] This is the true meaning of the exclamation, "ah, ah, our soul," *i.e.* our desire, just what we desired; see Ps. xxvii. 12.

We have swallowed him up] 2 S. xvii. 16, "lest the king be swallowed up." The same Hebrew word is used in that passage. See the description of David's enemies, Ps. v. 9, and cf. Prov. i. 12.

26. *be clothed*] A metaphor commonly used of dignity, glory, light, righteousness; here, with bitter sarcasm, of shame and dishonour; cf. Job viii. 22; Ps. cix. 18, 29.

27. *which hath pleasure*] Who hath delight in; a word specially characteristic of David; see note on Ps. xli. 11.

prosperity] Lit. "peace," including safety and prosperity.

On the general question how the bitter imprecations, which especially characterize the psalms written during the period of David's flight from the court of Saul, can be reconciled with the spirit of religion, see Introduction.

PSALM XXXVI.

A psalm most remarkable for the vividness with which it portrays the contrast between evil and good; without any intermediate stage the Psalmist passes (*v.* 5) from the workings of wickedness in the heart of the wicked to the attributes of Jehovah, and the abundant blessedness of His people.

The contemplative character of the psalm, the absence of personal allusions, and the quiet confidence in the triumph of the righteous, point to a later period in David's life than that to which the preceding psalms have been referred; it may have been composed at Jerusalem, either before the king's great fall, or more probably towards the close of his reign.

THE transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, *that there is* no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, † until his iniquity be found to be hateful.

† Heb. *to find his iniquity to hate.*

3 The words of his mouth *are* iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good.

4 He deviseth ‖ mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way *that is* not good; he abhorreth not evil.

‖ Or, *vanity.*

5 [a] Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens; *and* thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds.

a Ps. 57. 10. & 108. 4.

6 Thy righteousness *is* like † the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

† Heb. *the mountains of God.*

7 How † excellent *is* thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

† Heb. *precious.*

8 They shall be † abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

† Heb. *watered.*

There are three strophes of four, five, and three verses each: the last breaks off abruptly with the overthrow of the wicked.

1. *within my heart*] Or, "within his heart." The construction of the first verse is obscure, but presents a singularly striking figure if we adopt what seems on the whole the most satisfactory explanation. The voice of transgression (speaks) to the wicked within his heart; *i.e.* in the heart of the wicked there is a voice of crime. Crime is personified as dwelling in the heart of the wicked, and as uttering suggestions, to which he listens as to an oracle. This involves a slight change in the present text, for which substantial reasons are adduced (see Note below). Another translation is proposed, which gives the same general sense, though in a less distinct and striking form: "What vice utters to the wicked is well known to my heart." Del. The Psalmist hears within his own heart the echo of the suggestions which sin whispers oracularly to the wicked; this explains to him how it is that a man can sin so fearlessly: he who listens to it loses altogether the sense of God's Presence and the fear of His judgments.

2. Another verse presenting great difficulties of construction, but a clear strong sense however it is taken. On the whole the following translation seems the most natural. "For it (*i.e.* crime speaking in the man's heart) makes all smooth to him in his own eyes, *so as not* to find his sin, to hate it." The man under the influence of that spirit of evil loses all sense of guilt and danger, cannot find his sin, much less feel its hatefulness. Ewald gives an ingenious but less probable rendering: "In his eyes it is flattering (he thinks it a fine thing, it gives him satisfaction) to find his iniquity (to devise and think out a crime), and to hate," to cultivate hatred instead of love.

4. *mischief*] **Iniquity**, better than "vanity," as in the margin. The same word is used in the passage of Micah ii. 1, which corresponds exactly with this, and is probably taken from it.

he abhorreth not] This seems at first sight almost an anticlimax; it is, however, very forcible, if we refer it to the action of the secret oracle, which gradually destroys all sense of the evil of sin: the last stage is utter apathy.

5. A burst of rapture: here is the voice of the true oracle: all the attributes of the Lord stand out at once before the eyes of God's servant, never more distinctly than when the workings of evil give intensity to his feelings.

6. *great mountains*] Or, "mountains of God;" God's creation, on which He has stamped the impress of His own majesty and grandeur. Such epithets as these shew how deeply the Hebrew felt the beauty and majesty of natural scenery: the mountains were to him an outward representation of the righteousness, deep rooted in the very essence of the Godhead, and towering over the earth in its manifestation.

a great deep] Unfathomable, which no human or created understanding can sound; cf. Rom. xi. 33.

thou preservest] One of the most touching characteristics of Hebrew poetry is the instantaneous transition from the contemplation of God's majesty and unapproachable essence to that of His providential care. Compare Pss. civ. and cxlv. 14—16; see also the last words in Jonah.

8. *fatness of thy house*] Not without a reference to the offerings in the sanctuary; nor can the Christian exclude the thought of that great Offering, the food and sustenance of the soul, which those offerings prefigured; cf. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. The word "house" proves that the psalm was not written during the exile, but not that it belongs to a later time than David's; see note on Ps. v. 7.

pleasures] Or, "delights." The Hebrew word suggests a paradisiacal state of bliss;

9 For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

10 O [†]continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

12 There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

"thy Edens," so to speak, watered by the river of life.

9. *fountain of life*] The source of all life, natural and spiritual, all that is promised in the Old Testament, and given by Christ; cf. Prov. xvi. 22; Jer. ii. 13; Joh. iv. 14, v. 26; Rev. xxii. 1.

in thy light] St John found here the central truth of his doctrinal system; see ch. i. 4. The true light can only be discerned by those who live in it. The believing soul lives in an element of light, which at once quickens and satisfies the spiritual faculty, whereby heaven and heavenly things are realized. This verse, as Delitzsch observes, is constantly in the mouth of the great thinkers, Augustine and Malebranche. Thus Plato teaches; to see the sun the eye must be ἡλιοειδής.

10. *continue*] Lit. "draw out," **prolong**.

11. *foot of pride*] This marks David's hand. Every psalm of his which speaks of danger points to the *pride* of his enemies, secret or open, as the source.

remove me] That is, drive me out of the land; the same word is used 2 K. xxi. 8. The prayer indicates the consciousness of danger from disaffected subjects. There may be a reference to Joab and his party.

12. *There*] The word is emphatic. The Psalmist sees, as a prophet, the very place of the overthrow: he realizes the future, and speaks of it as an accomplished fact.

NOTE on PSALM XXXVI. 1.

Instead of לבי, "my heart," read לבו, "his heart." This was certainly the reading of the LXX., Vulg., Jerome, and Syr., followed by the Arab., Æth. The Targum alone has "my heart," "wickedness saith to the sinner in my heart:" an unintelligible statement, for which, however, a transcriber was probably responsible: in the Antwerp Polyglott the reading is לבבה. De Rossi observes, "לבו, cordis ejus, Kenn. 649, forte 36, mei 667, 867." He then notices the old versions, as above, and gives a list of critics who support the reading, Houbigant, Michaelis, Knapp, Schultz, Matt., Dath. With these nearly all modern critics agree, *e.g.* Ew., Hupf., Hitzig, and without any hesitation. Hitzig points out that ו is very frequently changed to י in the MSS., an observation which is of great importance in its bearing upon a far more serious question; see critical Note on Ps. xxii. 16. Delitzsch, Dr Kay, and the Bishop of Lincoln defend the Masoretic reading, which the bishop renders, "The oracle of sin to the wicked (is this)—in the secret of my heart."

PSALM XXXVII.

David persuadeth to patience and confidence in God, by the different estate of the godly and the wicked.

A Psalm of David.

FRET [a]not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

[a] Prov. 23. 17. & 24. 1

PSALM XXXVII.

This is one of the alphabetic psalms, and, like all others of that class, it is wholly didactic. The style is calm, grave and methodical; there is nothing of lyrical movement; no passion; no allusion to personal circumstances; it is altogether the work of a teacher of great experience and high authority, having no object but the edification of the people. It is attributed in the inscription to David; nor is it improbable that towards the end of his life (see *v.* 25) he may have composed this among other psalms for the use of his subjects: the language and whole tone of the composition are certainly unlike other Davidic psalms, but the difference may be to some extent accounted for by the subject-matter, and by the object of the writer.

The true object of the whole psalm is to warn the hearer against the temptation to repine at the success of the ungodly. It proceeds throughout on the principle of certain and complete retribution. The real peace, prosperity, deliverance, and salvation of the righteous are absolutely certain; so also the ruin and destruction of the wicked. Some expressions point to a future state; see *vv.* 18, 27, 29, 37; but the point of view is altogether that of the law. It is the teaching of the old dispensation, which nowhere stands

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and † verily thou shalt be fed.

† Heb. *in truth*, or, *stableness*.

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 † [b] Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass.

† Heb. *Roll thy way upon the LORD*. [b] Prov. 16. 3. Matt. 6. 25. 1 Pet. 5. 7.

6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

7 † Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

† Heb. *Be silent to the LORD*.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked *shall* not *be*: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it *shall* not *be*.

11 [c] But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

[c] Matt. 5.

12 The wicked ‖ plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

‖ Or, *practiseth*.

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out more distinct, more complete, or in a nobler and more attractive form. It may be regarded as the authoritative statement of the great teacher of the nation touching the questions raised in the book of Job, with which the writer was evidently familiar: see notes on 1, 2, 4, 10, 13, 35, 36, 38. Still it leaves the real problem of life but very partially solved, and suggests difficulties which could only be removed by Him, Who brought life and immortality to light.

1. *Fret not thyself*] The exhortation proves the depth and extent of this natural feeling. The expression in the original is very forcible: do not work thyself into heat; look coolly upon the facts; the heat will otherwise take the form of envy, the most perilous of all temptations; cf. Prov. xxiv. 19, and the expression of Job's grief and amazement, xxi. 6 ff.

2. *cut down*] Job xiv. 2; see, too, the deliberate judgment of Job himself, xxvii. 13—23.

3. *so shalt thou dwell*] Or, **dwell in the land**: this is at once an exhortation and promise, as in *v.* 27; cf. Deut. xxxiii. 28; Prov. ii. 21: see also Lev. xxvi. 3—10.

verily thou shalt be fed] Lit. "feed truth," of which two interpretations are suggested, (1) feed securely, taking truth in the common sense of stability, or security; and (2) "practise truth," cultivate faithfulness; a good sense, and fully justified by Hebrew usage; thus Hupf., Hitz. Aquila has *νέμου πίστιν*.

4. *Delight thyself*] A very forcible word, which, however, inadequately expresses the feeling of blessedness and rapture in the original. The true counterpoise to envy of the temporal prosperity of the wicked is the inward intensity of joy in communion with God; compare Phil. iv. 4; Job xxii. 26; Isai. lviii. 14.

5. *Commit*] Lit. as in the margin, "roll;" *i.e.* cast thyself altogether without hesitation, by a natural spontaneous movement of heart and soul; thus Prov. xvi. 3; see note on Ps. xxii. 8.

bring it to pass] Lit. "will do," a pregnant expression, implying complete accomplishment of His purpose; so in Ps. xxii. 31, lii. 9.

7. *Rest*] Or, as in the margin, "be silent," the silence of perfect resignation and acquiescence.

8. *in any wise*] Lit. "only to do evil;" the expression is elliptical, and means fret not thyself, since that can only lead thee to do evil; *i. e.* to murmuring against God, envy of man, or even dishonest acts which will class thee with the evildoers.

9. *For evildoers*] Not merely a general axiom, but a special warning; envy leads to evildoing, and evildoing to destruction.

wait upon the LORD] Patiently abide the time of His manifestation. Cf. Prov. ii. 21, 22.

10. *his place*] Job vii. 10.

and it shall not be] Or, "but he is not;" not the least trace of him shall remain; cf. Job viii. 18, 22.

11. This connection between meekness, a humble, patient and gentle character, and earthly prosperity, is justified by our Lord's adoption of the saying in the beginning of the sermon on the mount. It represents a general law, leaving untouched the exceptions, which can only be dealt with hereafter.

12. *plotteth*] A good translation; cf. Ps. xxxi. 13, where A.V. has "devised." The marginal amendment is unnecessary.

13 [d] The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, *and* to slay † such as be of upright conversation.

15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

16 A little that a righteous man hath *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

18 The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD *shall be* as † the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

22 For *such as be* blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be* cursed of him shall be cut off.

23 The steps of a *good* man are § ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him with* his hand.

25 I have been young, and *now*

[d] Ps. 2. 4.

† Heb. *the upright of way.*

† Heb. *the preciousness of lambs.*

§ Or, *established.*

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13. *laugh*] Cf. ii. 4. The word expresses the utter futility and madness of devices against God's servant.

his day] See Job xviii. 20; Jer. l. 27, 31; Obad. 12. The day in which a man is shewn as he is, and receives his own deserts, is in the fullest sense his own true day. Whatever the result may be, it is the just and necessary consequence of his own acts. Compare "his own place," Acts i. 25.

18. *knoweth the days*] Ps. i. 6, xxxi. 15.

20. *fat of lambs*] This translation is adopted by many commentators ancient and modern, and presents a forcible figure, since the fat of lambs was wholly consumed upon the altar in the daily sacrifice. There is, however, somewhat incongruous in the simile; the lamb, and especially its fat, would suggest thoughts of acceptance, rather than of destruction; and, on the whole, it is more probable (Hupf. says "indubitable," ohne Zweifel) that the original words mean, "the preciousness of fields," *i.e.* the flowers of the field, an image of frequent occurrence both in the Old and New Testament; see above *v.* 2, and compare Matt. vi. 30; Jam. i. 11.

21. *borroweth*] This implies both that the wicked is reduced to poverty, compelled to borrow, and unable to discharge his obligations, and that the dishonesty which caused his ruin continues to shew itself.

sheweth mercy] A proof that he is, and that he deserves to be, prosperous. This verse expresses a deep and true moral aspect both of poverty and prosperity, the one, as a punishment for sin, involves an incapacity of discharging obligations; the other, as a reward of virtue, enables a man to confer benefits, and to be a blessing to his fellows; cf. Deut. xv. 6, xxviii. 12. This explanation of the text is given by Calvin, and well defended by Hupfeld. The antithesis between "borroweth" and "sheweth mercy" stands out more distinctly in the original, where each is expressed by a single word: the former implying cleaving, a helpless dependence on the lender; the latter a free, generous, and gracious distribution of benefits.

giveth] This completes the antithesis, since it implies that no return is exacted or expected.

22. *For*] This verse shews how it is that the wicked and the righteous are in the position described in the preceding: the connection of thought is apt to be overlooked.

23. *ordered*] The marg. "established" is correct. The meaning is that God secures the just man from falling, He strengthens his feet.

a...man] The word "good" is not needed; by "man" the Psalmist understands man as he should be, and as he is when strengthened by the Lord.

he delighteth] *i.e.* God approves his way.

24. *fall*] *i.e.* into some misfortune; the idea of falling into a sin of error or infirmity may be included, but does not appear to be the direct object of the assurance.

utterly cast down] Or, "be prostrated," lit. "stretched out his full length." There may be a partial fall or stumble, but not utter prostration; see especially 2 Cor. iv. 9; and cf. Prov. xxiv. 16.

25. *now am old*] The assertion implies that though for a season the righteous may

am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

† Heb. *all the day.*

26 *He is* † ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed *is* blessed.

27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

30 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

31 The law of his God *is* in his heart; none of his ‖ steps shall slide.

‖ Or, *goings.*

32 The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.

34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it.*

35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like ‖ a green bay tree.

‖ Or, *a green tree that groweth in his own soil.*

36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

37 Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace.

38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 But the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD: *he is* their strength in the time of trouble.

40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

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suffer, yet he cannot be utterly forsaken; nor can the truth of the observation, as a general rule, be disproved, even under a dispensation which reserves the rectification of apparent or real inequalities to a future state.

26. This implies that the good man is never reduced to such straits as to be unable to help others: a statement which the history of great saints abundantly confirms; see especially 2 Cor. iv. 8—12 and viii. 2.

27. *dwell for evermore*] This is the best comment on *v.* 3, and proves that the command involves a promise.

28. See Note below.

33. This promise refers to two ways in which the wicked persecutes the just, by force and by wrong judgment: God will not leave him under the power of the wicked, nor ratify the condemnation pronounced by an ignorant or unrighteous judge.

35. *like a green bay tree*] The marg. brings out the true meaning of the Hebrew. The wicked man is described as spreading himself out with a rank luxuriance like an "indigenous tree," or rather "shrub," flourishing in its native soil. The contrast between this description and that of the just man in the first psalm is striking; and the account given there in the note on *v.* 3 may suggest that the oleander, a native shrub with bright flowers but no fruit, abundance of leaves but poisonous, growing wild, useless to man, and untended, may have been here in the Psalmist's mind. Compare our Lord's words, Matt. xv. 13, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not *planted* shall be rooted up;" see also Job xviii. 16—18.

36. Compare Job xx. 5. The coincidences between the whole of this psalm and the book of Job are remarkable, the more so since the point of view is very different: that is the production of an anxious and perplexed inquirer; this of one who has learned, and has the mission to teach, the truth.

37. *the end of that man is peace*] This does not explicitly declare, but it suggests, the promise of an hereafter. "The righteous hath hope in his death." The two assurances are incompatible with belief in personal annihilation. "The end" means "the hereafter," "the future condition," the state reserved for a man. In this and in the next verse it may possibly include a man's posterity, but far more naturally refers to the ultimate result of his acts: to the righteous it is eternal peace; to the unrighteous "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord;" 2 Thess. i. 9: cf. Ps. xcii. 7.

38. *the end*] The French, "l'avenir," comes nearest to the Hebrew idiom. Ewald takes "nachwelt," with the same meaning. "Posterity" (Per.) or "issue" (Kay) expresses very incompletely the force of the Hebrew. Ges. extrema sors alicujus. Thus Job viii. 7, xlii. 12; Jer. l. 12, where the A.V. has "the hindermost," better, "the last state."

NOTE on Psalm xxxvii. 28.

The letter ע is not represented: it may be assumed that a word beginning with this letter has been accidentally omitted. Such a word may be easily supplied by conjecture; thus Ewald suggests עֹשֵׂי טוֹב, doers of good. The ancient versions, however, had a different word, which the LXX. render ἄνομοι, according to the reading of the Codex Alex. Instead of יִשָּׁמֵרוּ, they must have read יִשָּׁמְדוּ, will be cut off: LXX., Cod. Alex., ἐκδιωχθήσονται, Sym. ἐξαρθήσονται (which Field, 'Hexapla,' refers to the last word in the clause): Hupfeld, therefore, and Ewald consider that the true reading is עַוָּלִים יִשָּׁמְדוּ, "sinners shall be cut off."

PSALM XXXVIII.

David moveth God to take compassion of his pitiful case.

A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

2 For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.

3 *There is* no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither *is there any* [1] rest in my bones because of my sin.

[1] Heb. *peace*, or, *health*.

4 For mine iniquities are gone over

Psalm XXXVIII.

Among the penitential psalms none bear deeper marks of a season of utter prostration of heart and spirit, of a combination of the most cruel trials, mental and bodily; the strain is continued without intermission to the end of the 41st psalm, which closes the first book of psalms. The history of David leaves us no doubt as to the time and circumstances under which it was composed. It must have been some time after the complete awakening of his conscience to the deadly guilt contracted by Uriah's death, when the results of that act were manifested in the fearful disorders of his family, polluted by incest and murder; in the estrangement of his dearest friends and nearest kinsmen; in the triumph of malicious and slanderous enemies; in agonies of mind, accompanied and exaggerated by a terrible malady, of which the symptoms, elsewhere noted, are described most vividly in this psalm, the flesh diseased, the bones racked, the loins filled with fierce pain, the heart panting, strength failing, the eye darkened as with the shadow of death; all attributed by the Psalmist himself to his own sin. Yet withal there is a sense of inward communion. David knows that the hand which presses on him is for chastisement, and that the Lord hears his groaning; his confession and contrition are combined with hope; he desires to be nearer God, and sums up all with calling upon the Lord as his salvation.

All these things point to the period just preceding the revolt of Absalom. At that time there are indications that David was prostrate by disease, which gave full scope to the machinations of his son and his abettors; from which he recovered only to witness their success.

There is a close resemblance between this, as, indeed, all other penitential psalms, and the book of Job, sufficient to prove that one of the two writers was familiar with the other (see Introduction to Job, p. 15); though the similarity of position might partly account for the coincidences.

The psalm is frequently referred to in the New Testament. Its application to the Saviour, of whom David was a type in so many points, in none more so than in suffering, is natural; but though prophetical in the sense that the words came from David's heart under the influence which made them true exponents of feelings which reached their highest intensity in the representative of fallen man, the psalm is not predictive, it speaks of the present and actual, not of the future and ideal; it belongs to a man not only of sorrow but of sin; of sin not merely imputed but committed; and as such is adopted without modification by conscience-smitten sinners, even while they feel that Christ's acceptance of the burden, and participation of the agonies, assures them of the help which David sought, and gives them a certainty of deliverance.

There are three principal divisions, 1—8, 9—15, 16—22: each with strophes of two verses.

to bring to remembrance] This inscription occurs again in Ps. lxx. The main purport of both psalms is to bring David's suffering and repentance before God; but the term has a close connection with the offering of incense, the symbol of earnest and acceptable prayer. Cf. Rev. viii. 4.

2. *stick fast...presseth me sore*] Or, "Thine arrows have fallen on me, and Thy hand falleth heavily upon me." In the original the same word is used in both clauses: the arrows of God's wrath fell as from a great height, inflicting severe wounds, and then God's hand itself fell upon him, pressing him down to the earth. Compare Job vi. 4.

3. *rest*] Or, as in the margin, "peace:" the bones are racked with incessant pains.

mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

5 My wounds stink *and* are corrupt because of my foolishness.

6 I am †troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.

† Heb. *wried.*

7 For my loins are filled with a loathsome *disease:* and *there is* no soundness in my flesh.

8 I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

9 Lord, all my desire *is* before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.

10 My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also †is gone from me.

† Heb. *is not with me.*

11 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my †sore; and ‖my kinsmen stand afar off.

† Heb. *stroke.*
‖ Or, *my neighbours.*

12 They also that seek after my life lay snares *for me:* and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.

13 But I, as a deaf *man*, heard not; and *I was* as a dumb man *that* openeth not his mouth.

14 Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth *are* no reproofs.

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of my sin] The immediate cause of suffering is the infliction, the ultimate cause is the sin which incurred wrath. The recognition of sin as the alone cause of the infliction is a sufficient proof that this psalm was not written by Jeremiah, to whom it is attributed by some critics (*e.g.* Hitzig). Jeremiah never attributes his great suffering to his personal guilt.

4. *gone over mine head*] *i.e.* overwhelming him like a flood; Ps. cxxiv. 4, 5. See also xviii. 4 and 16.

5. The sin works inwardly like poison; it produces swellings which burst. The expression may possibly be figurative, denoting extreme mental anguish; but the symptoms are so accurately described as to leave little doubt that David was at the time smitten with a disease common in all ages in the East. Compare the account of Hezekiah's malady, Isai. xxxviii. 21.

6. *troubled*] The margin has "wried," which gives the true sense, *i.e.* bent, twisted by violent spasms.

bowed down] Both this word and that rendered "go" in the next clause describe the prostration and the slow uncertain movements of a heavily afflicted mourner; cf. Ps. xxxv. 14.

7. *loins*] Or, "kidneys." The *disease* is described by a word which means burning: a violent inflammatory action on the kidneys seems too specific for mere metaphor, though doubtless the Psalmist realized in such symptoms a type of the spiritual disease which consumed the soul.

8. *feeble*] The original is far more precise; it speaks of deadly chill, corpse-like cold, such as alternates with fever fits. The last clause is not easy to translate; it means, I roar from the moaning of my heart; both words, "roar" and "moaning," belong properly to wild beasts: the roaring is, so to speak, an echo of the heart's moaning; cf. Ps. xxii. 1.

9. The first indication of hope in this psalm, but one which, though it may sound faint, is yet full of faith, and prepares for *v.* 15.

groaning] Or, **sighing.**

10. *panteth*] The word is well chosen, and expresses the force of the original, which is singularly precise and graphic; it means, "goes round," *i.e.* "palpitates violently," as in severe attacks of fever.

the light of mine eyes] The failure of sight is noted by Job, xvii. 7, as one of the last and most distressing results of his terrible disease. See also Ps. vi. 7, xiii. 3.

11. *sore*] Better, as in the margin, "stroke:" the word means specially a blow inflicted in wrath. It is the word used in Isai. liii. 4, 8.

kinsmen] This rendering is probably correct, but misses the antithesis, "my near ones stood afar off." The word literally means "near ones," near either in place, friendship, or affinity. See Luke xxiii. 49.

12. This is the first intimation in the psalm tnat David's sufferings are connected with the machinations of his enemies. His prostration of strength, and inability for a season to discharge his kingly duties, probably suggested to Absalom and his abettors the devices described in 2 S. xv. 1—6, and gave them an opportunity of carrying them on without let or hindrance.

speak mischievous things] Or, **malice**; lit. "ruin," "destruction" (see note on Ps. v. 9). David's enemies doubtless represented the disease not only as a chastisement, but as a proof that God had abandoned him to destruction for his great crime. See Ps. xli. 6—8.

13. *a deaf man*, &c.] The Psalmist probably refers to David's silence while the con-

15 For ‖in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt ‖hear, O Lord my God.

‖ Or, *thee do I wait for.*
‖ Or, *answer.*

16 For I said, *Hear me*, lest *otherwise* they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify *themselves* against me.

17 For I *am* ready †to halt, and my sorrow *is* continually before me.

† Heb. *for halting.*

18 For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.

19 But mine enemies †*are* lively, *and* they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

† Heb *being living, are strong.*

20 They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow *the thing that* good *is*.

21 Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me.

22 Make haste †to help me, O Lord my salvation.

† Heb. *for my help.*

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spiracy was proceeding. The typical reference to our Lord is obvious; compare Isai. liii. 7.

14. *no reproofs*] The word is judicial, and means **pleadings**, whether to support, or, as here, to rebut a charge. (LXX. ἐλεγμοί: Vulg. redargutiones; cf. Job xxiii. 4, A. V. "arguments.") David represents himself as a criminal, who will not even attempt to defend himself, relying altogether on the justice and wisdom of the judge. The silence does not therefore prove the consciousness of guilt, on the contrary, it assumes innocence so far as regards the slanders of his enemies.

15. *thou wilt hear*] Or, "answer;" here specially in the sense, "Thou wilt make answer for me, take my cause in hand, and be my advocate;" cf. xxxv. 1, and notes on Job xvi. 19—21.

16. *Hear me*] These words, and "otherwise," are inserted by our translators, and shew that they connected this verse closely with the preceding. This is probably correct, but another connection of thought is possible, and has been well defended. David may be giving the reason for his silence. He feared lest by some injudicious answer he might give occasion to his enemies, who had already triumphed when he made a false step; see Ps. xxxix. 1, 2.

17. *ready to halt*] *i.e.* in a position where a fall is imminent, and can only be prevented by the interposition of God; cf. Ps. xxxv. 15. See Job xii. 5.

sorrow] Not inner grief, but **affliction**. David cannot forget for one moment the suffering which he endures, the result of God's anger and of his own sin.

18. *For*] This is the fourth clause beginning with the same conjunction. This seems to connect each and all with David's abstaining from self-justification: (1) because God hears him; (2) because he may give further occasion to his enemies; (3) because he feels his great danger and is conscious of sin; and (4) because he has no course open but confession and contrition.

19. *lively*] If the reading is correct the sense of the clause is that given in the margin, "my enemies are strong, being full of life." Jerome, "viventes confortati sunt." It is probable, however, that one word is slightly altered, and that the meaning is "they who are my enemies without cause are strong," *i.e.* numerous; cf. Ps. iii. 1. See Note below.

20. The construction does not quite correspond to the original, **and, requiting evil for good, they hate me, because I follow good.**

22. *O Lord my salvation*] Note the progressive development of feeling (as *vv.* 1, 9, 15, and 22); first, prayer, then confidence in God's knowledge, then hope, then assurance of salvation in God. Cf. Ex. xv. 2; Ps. xxiv. 5, xxvii. 1; Isai. xii. 2, &c.

NOTE on PSALM XXXVIII. 19.

For חיים Houbigant, Hitzig, Hupfeld, and Delitzsch would read חנם. They consider it doubtful whether חיים can mean "full of life;" see, however, Exod. i. 19, where חיות has this sense, yet with a very different bearing.

PSALM XXXIX.

1 *David's care of his thoughts.* 4 *The consideration of the brevity and vanity of life,* 7 *the reverence of God's judgments,* 10 *and prayer, are his bridles of impatiency.*

To the chief Musician, *even* to [a]Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.

[a] 1 Chron. 25. 1.

I SAID, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my

PSALM XXXIX.

This psalm is closely connected with the preceding. It developes one leading thought, accounting for the silence which David had maintained when unjustly accused. That silence had doubtless attracted much attention, and given occasion to his enemies, and probably troubled or even alienated

tongue: I will keep † my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

† Heb. *a bridle*, or, *muzzle for my mouth*.

2 I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, *even* from good; and my sorrow was † stirred.

† Heb. *troubled*.

3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue,

4 LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is*; *that* I may know † how frail I *am*.

† Or, *what time I have here*.

5 Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man † at his best state *is* altogether [b] vanity. Selah.

† Heb. *settled*. [b] Ps. 62. 9. & 144. 4.

6 Surely every man walketh in † a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up *riches*,

† Heb. *an image*.

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many of his friends. It had weighed also upon his own spirit, and during an interval of disquietude and mental struggle produced feelings which find expression in this composition, so pathetic and solemn that it has been selected, together with the 90th, by our Church for the Burial Service.

Ewald, who regards this as the most beautiful of all elegies in the Psalter, points out the close resemblance to the book of Job.

After one introductory verse the psalm is divided into six strophes, each of two verses: the refrain at *vv.* 5, 11 is marked by Selah.

Jeduthun] One of the three chief musicians, or teachers of the Levitical chorus; see the marginal reference. The other two were Asaph and Heman. Two other psalms bear the name of Jeduthun, whose special connection with David is indicated by his official title, "the king's seer;" 2 Chro. xxxv. 15: he appears, from 1 Chro. xv. 17—19, to have been previously named Ethan.

1. *I said*] The reference to Ps. xxxviii. 13, &c. is unmistakeable. David resolved not to speak while the wicked were present, feeling that he might give way to the temptation of murmuring, and that they would triumph over any hasty or imprudent words, and use them as means for his destruction. This resolution, however, was intimately connected with his consciousness of sin, and the feeling that his affliction came from God; 8—11.

sin not with my tongue] Cf. Job ii. 10.

bridle] Or, **muzzle**, as in the margin. Cf. Ps. cxli. 3; James iii. 2.

2. *with silence*] The word includes the idea of submission, dumb in silent submission; thus Ps. iv. 4.

even from good] The phrase is peculiar and somewhat obscure. The rendering of our Prayer-book version, "even from good words," affords a good sense; David abstained altogether from speaking lest, together with good words, hasty and wrong ones might escape his lips; but the construction is doubtful: see Note below.

3. This verse describes the mental struggle and its effects. Silence was impossible, the heart burnt, the conflicting thoughts burst out in flame, and so at last the Psalmist speaks, not, however, to his adversaries but to God. The rest of the psalm tells us what he said. Cf. Job xxxii. 18, 19; Jer. xx. 9.

4. *make me to know*] *i.e.* know so as to apply the well-known truth to my heart; to realize the bearings, as well as the fact, of the shortness and uncertainty of life. Cf. Ps. xc. 12. The last clause is better rendered in the text than in the margin: what David wishes to know is, not what time he has to live, but how frail, how short-lived he is; and to keep that in mind as a preservative from presumption. Hupfeld questions this meaning of the word in our text, but he suggests a reading which presents the same sense (quantilli sim ævi: sc. חלד for חדל). Gesenius accepts and defends the present reading.

5. *Behold*] An exclamation of wonder; as though in answer to his prayer a sudden conviction, deeper and more practical than heretofore, had come upon him. Compare, for the phrase "handbreath," Matt. vi. 27.

at his best state] This gives the sense; literally as in the margin "settled," that is, every man, however settled his position may be, is altogether a vain breath. Cf. Pss. lxii. 9, lxxviii. 39, &c.

6. *in a vain shew*] Or, "as a shadow," lit. "image;" a shadowy outline, a mere unsubstantial form, or phantom; cf. Ps. lxxiii. 20. In other passages "shadow" is generally used, *e.g.* Job xiv. 2, Ps. cxliv. 4. Thus Pindar, σκιᾶς ὄναρ ἄνθρωποι; and Horace, Pulvis et umbra sumus.

they are disquieted in vain] The original is stronger, **they make a loud noise** (like that of many waters or a large assembly) **about nothing**. Their existence is full of noise but in itself mere nothingness. The two clauses together express the emptiness of the outer show and of the noisy turmoil of life.

riches] A word supplied by our translators, but the Psalmist probably speaks of "corn;" the farmer heaps up the wheat-sheaves, but a robber, or an oppressor, or his child may gather them into the garner. See

and knoweth not who shall gather them.

7 And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope *is* in thee.

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst *it*.

10 Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the †blow of thine hand.

11 When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest †his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: *c* for I *am* a stranger with thee, *and* a sojourner, as all my fathers *were*.

13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

† Heb. *that which is to be desired in him, to melt away.*

c Lev. 25. 23. 1 Chron. 29. 15. Ps. 119. 19. Hebr. 11. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 11.

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the parable of the rich fool, Luke xii. 20, and cf. Ps. xlix. 10.

7. *And now*] This word marks a transition of thought. Now, taking all these things into consideration, what is the Psalmist's expectation?

my hope is in thee] Does this imply hope in a state after death? If not, the state of mind is one very hard to understand. The one thing David is sure of is that his life here is a mere nothing, a shadow, an empty sound; the hope must therefore have another object. The Psalmist does not openly declare what it was. He was not moved to reveal it: but here, as in numberless other passages, he leaves no alternative but utter disappointment, unless the hope in death is realized hereafter. Compare St Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 19, and Job xiii. 15, where see critical Note. David uses here the same word and construction which are there discussed. Ewald, who notes the general resemblance between this psalm and Job, holds that the point of view is different and higher in Job; but in this and in the following verse we have the result of deep reflection upon the thoughts suggested in that book.

8. *Deliver me*] The first thing David prays for is deliverance from the sin to which he attributes all his misery. He includes inward assurance of forgiveness, cleansing from the guilt, and deliverance from the power and penalty of sin. The word transgression is applied specially to such a breach of God's law as that which David had committed: see Ps. xxxii. 1.

9. *thou didst it*] The great word which the Psalmist has already used (xxii. 31) of God's saving work. Cf. 1 S. iii. 18; 2 S. xvi. 10; Job ii. 10.

10. *thy stroke*] See xxxviii. 11, and cf. Job xiii. 21.

blow] Lit. "conflict," or "quarrel;" but "blow" gives the true meaning of the Hebrew word, which occurs here only.

11. *with rebukes*] Cf. Ps. lxxx. 16.

his beauty] "Thou makest his beauty melt away as by the moth." Thou corrodest, as by a moth, his delight: lit. what he desires and delights in; the bona naturalia, health, strength, beauty. Cf. Job xiii. 28; Isai. l. 9.

surely every man is vanity] See *v.* 5; that is the keynote—a most melancholy one but for the suggested hope.

12. *a stranger with thee, and a sojourner*] The stranger is one who is merely a guest for a season, the sojourner one who lives as a client, under the protection and patronage of a prince or noble: neither has any right, or settled footing, in the land. The earth is not the home of man. An image which is at once humbling and suggestive of a sure hope. See marg. reff. and Eph. ii. 19.

my fathers] Compare David's own words, 1 Chro. xxix. 15, "for we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers."

13. This verse is full of reminiscences of Job, which must have been present to the Psalmist's mind. For the first clause, "O spare me," lit. look away from me, *i.e.* turn away Thy wrathful look, compare Job vii. 19, xiv. 6. In the second clause, "that I may recover strength," lit. that I may shine (a metaphor from the light of dawn breaking forth after darkness), is an expression which occurs in this sense only in Job ix. 27 (where A.V. "comfort myself") and x. 20, "that I may take comfort." The prayer for a respite from pain, restoration for a short season to a state of happiness, is quite compatible with such belief in an hereafter as was attainable in the absence of a positive revelation. In itself such respite would be a very little thing, but as a pledge or sign of the cessation of God's anger it was of infinite importance to the Psalmist.

be no more] Absolutely no more so far as regards earth and the things of earth, Job vii. 8, and xx. 9: but like Enoch, "*who was not* (the same word in Hebrew), for God took him." Gen. v. 24.

NOTE on Psalm xxxix. 2.

מטוב implies privation of good; David's silence brought him no comfort; so Hupfeld. The rendering of the text is however justified by the common phrase מטוב עד רע, Gen. xxxi. 24; 2 S. xiii. 22.

PSALM XL.

1 *The benefit of confidence in God.* 6 *Obedience is the best sacrifice.* 11 *The sense of David's evils inflameth his prayer.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

† I WAITED patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of † an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

4 Blessed *is* that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O Lord my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: ¹ they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

6 ᵃ Sacrifice and offering thou didst

† Heb. *In waiting I waited.*

† Heb. *a pit of noise.*

¹ Or, [illegible] *order* [illegible]

ᵃ Ps. 51. [illegible] Isai. 1. [illegible] & 66. [illegible] Hos. 6. 6. Matt. [illegible] Heb. 10. [illegible]

Psalm XL.

This psalm belongs to the same cycle, and is immediately connected with the preceding: what the Psalmist there prayed for he now gives thanks for. It appears to have been written at an interval of comparative tranquillity, when David was raised out of the pit and felt his position secure. In the first part (1—5) the memory is haunted with the intense griefs of the past, but the patient waiting has been rewarded, the deliverance effected, and songs of thanksgiving flow freely. In the second (6—10) the source of those feelings is described. They are derived from the sense of obedience to the inner and to the written law, of hearty adhesion to the will and law of God, and of public recognition of God's gracious dealings. (11—17) Earnest prayers follow to the end; at first plaintive, indicating apprehension lest the relief should cease, an intense feeling of sin surrounding, grasping, bowing him down, taking light from the eye, and comfort from the heart; but they wind up with a full assurance of God's care, and a hope of speedy deliverance.

1. *I waited patiently*] The Hebrew idiom, "waiting I waited," forcibly expresses the intense feeling of expectation: I waited with my whole heart. Cf. Pss. xxvii. 14, and xxxvii. 7.

2. *an horrible pit*] Or, "a pit of destruction." The Hebrew word properly means "loud noise," "uproar," "crash." The association of the two ideas "pit" and "crash" is natural. It sets before us a warrior falling into a deep pit with crash of arms amid the shouts of enemies.

set my feet upon a rock] Cf. Ps. xxvii. 5.

established my goings] Or, "enabled me to step firmly." Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 23, and see xviii. 36.

3. *a new song*] See note on xxxiii. 3. Here it means a song expressing joy and thanksgiving for new mercies.

see it] *i.e.* the deliverance which gave occasion to the hymn. A comparison with Deut. xiii. 11 may, as Dr Kay suggests, indicate that the deliverance of which the Psalmist speaks was accompanied by a judgment inflicted on the transgressors. See Ps. lii. 6.

4. *respecteth not*] Or, "turneth not to:" the word is generally used of apostasy, turning to false gods. The word rendered "the proud" is rather peculiar, not occurring elsewhere in the plural; in the singular it is specially applied to Egypt, denoting a power which by loud boasts induces people to put their trust in it, and then fails them. The Psalmist, however, more probably alludes to Job ix. 13, where Rahab and his helpers are mentioned; see note. David may have pointed directly at Absalom and his *abettors*. See 2 S. xv. 1—6.

turn aside to lies] Literally, "apostates of falsehood," false lying apostates, either men who have forsaken the faith, or have broken their oaths of allegiance. This applies with peculiar force to such men as Ahithophel and other counsellors of Absalom.

5. *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works*] Job v. 9, ix. 10.

they cannot be reckoned, &c.] This translation expresses the sense of the original. The meaning is "they are innumerable," no one can set them forth in order when giving thanks to God. Thus Hupf., Kay. The LXX., Vulg.,

eb. ged.

not desire; mine ears hast thou †opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me,

8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* †within my heart.

leb. *in midst my vels.*

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

11 Withhold not thou thy tender

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and commentators generally, "there is none like unto Thee." Cf. Ps. lxxxix. 6.

6. In this famous passage David expresses with singular beauty the great truth that all outward observances are valueless without obedience and a full concurrence of the will of man with the will of God. This had ever been recognized by the teachers of Israel, and had but a few years previously been declared by Samuel (see 1 S. xv. 22). It is repeated by David, Ps. li. 16, by Asaph, l. 8—15, and by the prophets, *e.g.* Isai. i. 11—17; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6—8.

Sacrifice, &c.] Four kinds of offerings are named: two represent the conditions of *entering* into covenant with God, viz. sacrifice, the slaughter of a victim, and oblation, *mincha,* the fine flour with oil and frankincense presented at the same time on the altar. To these David contrasts the "opening of the ears." The words mean literally, "Thou hast digged ears to me" (Aq. ἔσκαψας); an expression however of which the exact meaning is disputed. It is held by many to refer to the custom of piercing a slave's ear in token of his intention to serve for ever: see Exod. xxi. 6 (where, however, a different word is used); Deut. xv. 17. A more natural and obvious interpretation is, that God has opened the Psalmist's ears, or, more accurately, made new ears for him, given him the faculty of receiving and understanding His law. (So it was probably taken by Sym. and the generality of the Greek Vss., κατεσκεύασάς μοι, or κατηρτίσω). The hearing ear, the legal equivalent to evangelical faith, is the first condition of inner communion with God, and as such presents a perfect antithesis to the outward form which merely represents the condition. The very remarkable rendering by the LXX. quoted in Hebrews x. 5, "A body thou hast prepared me," or "fitted for me," may be explained by supposing that the opening of the ear was regarded as equivalent to the consecration of all bodily faculties to God's service; this explanation satisfies either of the interpretations here given. It is not probable that the LXX. had a different reading.

burnt offering and sin offering] These are the legal conditions of *remaining* in a covenant state. To these the Psalmist opposes three points; (1) outward obedience, "Lo, I come;" (2) inner willingness; and (3) open expression of thanksgiving. The first clause may be rendered, "Lo I come with a rolled book written concerning me." The most probable interpretation is that the book is the book of the law, the Pentateuch: David means that by presenting himself with it he declares his intention to obey it perfectly: and though not certain, the most probable meaning is, that in the words "concerning me," he alludes more specially to the instructions touching the duties of a king in Deut. xvii. 14—20. The typical application to our Lord is obvious and very striking. As David presented himself before God in spirit with the book of the law describing his duties and rights, so the Saviour came with the word of God bearing witness to Him and expressing that will which He fulfilled. Our Authorized Version adopts a different punctuation, but gives the same general sense.

8. *within my heart*] Literally, as in the margin; but the word "heart" gives the real meaning; the word in Hebrew physiology designates the very innermost being, the deepest affections. The characteristic of the New Covenant is that the law is written in the heart by the Spirit (see Jerem. xxxi. 33); but it was anticipated in those who penetrated beyond the outer forms, and the true Israelite was always described as one who had the law in his heart. See Ps. xxxvii. 31; Isai. li. 7.

10. *from the great congregation*] Pss. xxii. 25, xxxv. 18.

11. With this verse begins the second part of the psalm, which runs altogether in a different strain; reflecting on his deep sinfulness the Psalmist is full of grief, and expresses his feelings in earnest prayers, sad confessions, imprecations against his enemies and longings for deliverance.

Withhold not] The same word is translated "refrained" in *v.* 9. The Psalmist evidently alludes to that passage. He had not refrained or "shut up" his lips, and he prays that God will not shut up His mercies, or "bowels of compassion," a New Testament expression which gives the real sense of the original word.

mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart [†] faileth me.

†Heb. *forsaketh.*

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

14 [b] Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

b Ps. 35. 4 & 70. 2.

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

17 But I *am* poor and needy; *yet* the Lord thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

PSALM XLI.

1 *God's care of the poor.* 4 *David complaineth of his enemies' treachery.* 10 *He fleeth to God for succour.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

BLESSED *is* he that considereth [‖] the poor: the LORD will deliver him [†] in time of trouble.

2 The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be

‖Or, *the weak, or, sick.* †Heb. *in the day of evil.*

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12. The exceedingly deep and bitter consciousness of sin in this verse belongs altogether to a late part of David's life. It was applied by the Fathers, especially by Augustine, to our Saviour as bearing the sins of the Church, of which He is at once the Head and Representative. Cf. Pss. xxxviii. 4, lxv. 3, lxix. 5, lxxiii. 26.

to look up] Or, "to see." David speaks twice before of the failure of sight under the combined working of mental and physical anguish. See Pss. xxxi. 9, and xxxviii. 10.

faileth me] Lit. "hath forsaken me," as in Ps. xxxviii. 10. David finds no support, no comfort in his own heart, it is like a false friend deserting him in his bitter need.

13. *deliver*] The ever-recurring cry of the penitent, cast down yet not despairing. His own heart has forsaken him, but he can still turn to God. Compare Ps. xxii. 20.

to help me] Or, "to my help," an expression somewhat more forcible, the help on which David was justified in counting, since it is secured to the faithful by God's promise. Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 22.

14. The following verses are repeated in Ps. lxx. The question as to which was the original is one on which critics differ. It appears on the whole most probable that the Psalmist on some occasion of deep affliction took the last verses of this psalm, and had them recited with a few and unimportant alterations.

15. *Aha*] See Ps. xxxv. 21.

17. *poor and needy*] The king might use these words truly at any time, most naturally in a season of deep affliction. Cf. Ps. lxxxvi. 1, and see xxxv. 10, xxxvii. 14.

thinketh] The transition in the original is very animated: "And as for me poor and needy—the Lord will care for me: my help and deliverer art Thou: O my God, tarry not." The last word is a deep sigh.

PSALM XLI.

This psalm, which completes the first book, is remarkable for its personal character. It explains or illustrates many intimations in psalms which belong to the same time. The Psalmist begins with blessing the man who shews due and kindly attention to the afflicted, and he then prays for restoration to health, and describes the feelings and conduct of his enemies during his sickness, their cruel slanders, malicious interpretations of his disease, and anticipations of his death. One among them is specially noted as a treacherous and crafty hypocrite, professing love and kindness, and using the opportunities of long intimacy to collect materials for the ruin of the sufferer's reputation. The psalm ends with a prayer for restoration, and a confident assurance of support and everlasting communion with God. The time is thus marked very exactly. It must have been after the arrival of Ahithophel, when the conspiracy was matured, and before the king's departure from Jerusalem, when the disease was still so severe as to keep him on his bed, but shewing some symptoms of amendment. It appears therefore to have been written some weeks, or it may be two or three months, before the catastrophe. All these indications point to the time when Absalom's conspiracy was nearly matured. The person designated in the psalm is undoubtedly Ahithophel. The structure is regular, four strophes, each of three verses.

blessed upon the earth: and †thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt † make all his bed in his sickness.

4 I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

5 Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

6 And if he come to see *me*, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; *when* he goeth abroad, he telleth *it*.

7 All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise † my hurt.

8 † An evil disease, *say they*, cleav-

† Heb. *evil to me.*
† Heb. *A thing of Belial.*

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1. *considereth*] This word includes the ideas of thoughtful attention, and judicious kindness, the kindness of a man who does not misinterpret the affliction.

poor] Or, "afflicted." David does not speak of poverty, but of weakness, a state of exhaustion and prostration.

the LORD will deliver, &c.] These prayers appear to be offered by David on behalf of one who had been faithful and loving in the time of his sore need; he desires that this friend may receive all that his own experience brought him to desire most earnestly. But it is possible that they are such as might be offered by the kindly visitor on behalf of David; the construction in that case would be somewhat different:—Blessed is the man who really understands the state of one smitten with a cruel disease, who can sympathize with him and pray for him, pray for his deliverance, for all that he needs.

in time of trouble] Or, as in marg., "in the day of evil." The meaning is the same, but the true rendering is more forcible. Symm. ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κακώσεως: thus too Syr.

2. *thou wilt not*] Or, as marg., "Do not Thou deliver him." A rapid transition from an expression of hope to a direct address to God.

unto the will] Literally, "the soul," equivalent to "desire;" cf. Pss. xxvii. 12, xxxv. 25.

3. *strengthen*] Or, "support."

thou wilt make] Literally, "Thou hast changed all his couch in his sickness." In these words two points are to be noted; first, the change of expression; instead of "Thou wilt," or "mayest Thou," we have "Thou hast," indicating the perfect confidence that the prayer is heard; and secondly, the phrase "changing all the couch," which most probably means changing the patient's state entirely, *i.e.* from a bed of sickness to perfect health (see Note below). This gives two gradations, first, the Lord supports and comforts the sufferer on his bed, and then raises him from it. All these expressions are so precise and graphic that there can be no reasonable doubt that David describes his own condition and feelings in the form of prayer, either offered by him on behalf of a compassionate friend, or by that friend on his behalf.

4. *I said*] The Hebrew emphasizes the word "I." I, for my part, said. This confirms the explanation suggested as an alternative in the foregoing note. Such was my friend's prayer, I for my own part, adds the Psalmist, prayed simply for mercy and healing, for I was conscious of my great sin.

heal my soul] vi. 2.

for I have sinned] Thus, as in other psalms of the same date, attributing his visitation altogether to his sin, Pss. xxxviii. 3—5, 17, 18, xxxix. 9—11, xl. 12.

against thee] li. 4.

5. *When shall he die*] This leaves no doubt as to the extremity of David's danger at the time.

6. *And if he come to see*] We can imagine this written immediately after a visit from Ahithophel, in whose face the clearsighted king saw the indications of malice and triumphant hate. David's remarkable power of insight is specially to be noticed; see 2 S. xiv. 17—20; and Ewald, 'Gesch.' III. p. 80.

he speaketh vanity] Rather, "he speaketh **falsehood**," *i.e.* hypocritical expressions of condolence, or hope of the king's recovery: the word rendered vanity (not the same as xxxix. 5) means mere emptiness, and lying; see Ps. xii. 2.

his heart gathereth] The heart in the meantime collects materials for new iniquity. The false friend watches the symptoms of disease in order to give point to slanderous imputations, which on leaving the sick chamber he takes care shall be rapidly spread. This verse loses somewhat of its force in the translation; nothing can be more graphic or affecting than the sick man's description of his false friend.

7. *whisper together*] The Hebrew is singularly graphic; it describes the enemies in a group whispering to each other, laying plots against the king; he seems to see them standing round his chamber, if not in his very presence.

8. *An evil disease*] Lit. "a thing of Belial is poured upon him" (see Ps. xviii. 4): here again the expressions are almost untranslateable—a thing of Belial, something which proceeds from crime and bears witness to it, a hopeless disease, one for which there is no remedy, is poured

eth fast unto him: and *now* that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

a John 13. 18. † Heb. *the man of my peace.* † Heb. *magnified.*

9 [a] Yea, † mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath † lifted up *his* heel against me.

10 But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

11 By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.

13 Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

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into him, entering like molten ore into his whole system.

9. *mine own familiar friend*] Literally, "man of my peace," an expression used by Jerem., xx. 10. Ahithophel, David's counsellor, was sent for by Absalom: after his arrival "the conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom." 2 S. xv. 12. There can be little doubt that this traitor is meant. The implicit confidence placed in Ahithophel is described 2 S. xvi. 23. David, however, does not appear to have known that he had actually joined Absalom until he had himself left Jerusalem. See 2 S. xv. 31. This psalm was probably written immediately after Ahithophel's arrival. He would then of course wait on the king, who detected at once the indications of malice. The hatred of Ahithophel has been ingeniously traced to his connection with Uriah: see Blunt's 'Coincidences.'

did eat of my bread] As a courtier and friend. This expression could scarcely be used save by a prince; taken in combination with *v.* 10 it points to a king. 1 S. xx. 24, 25; cf. 2 S. ix. 7, 13.

lifted up his heel] The Hebrew phrase is singular, "magnified his heel," *i.e.* lifted up his foot to trample upon me, as a conqueror puts "his foot upon the neck" of a prostrate foe, Josh. x. 24. The application to Judas, as the antitype of all traitors, and specially prefigured by Ahithophel, the bosom friend of David, is made by our Lord Himself, Joh. xiii. 18; but with the important omission of the words "in whom I trusted."

10. *that I may requite them*] This sounds like revenge, and doubtless it is not in the spirit of the gospel; but it must be remembered that it was the duty of David, as king and judge, "bearing not the sword in vain...the minister of God...a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. xiii. 4), not only to put down the conspirators, but to inflict upon them just and adequate punishment.

11. *I know*] David does not say "I shall know," for he realizes the certain future. In the latter clause, however, the wrong tense is given by our translators; it should be "for my enemy will not shout (in triumph) over me."

thou favourest me] This expression is characteristic of David; see Pss. xviii. 19, xxii. 8, xxxv. 27; see especially 2 S. xv. 26.

12. *integrity*] See note on Ps. xxvi. 1.

settest me] Or, "wilt establish me."

for ever] If this phrase stood alone it might possibly be explained of confidence in perfect restoration to God's favour and lifelong peace; such appears to be the meaning of the expression in Job xxxvi. 7; but comparing it with other passages, Pss. xvi. 11, xvii. 15, xxiii. 6, xxx. 12, we find here the distinct intimation of a hope of immortality.

13. This verse does not form part of the psalm, but marks the close of the first book; it is repeated at the end of the three following books: see Introduction.

NOTE on PSALM XLI. 3.

הפך "to turn," in the sense of an entire change either of position, or of state. משכב has the same ambiguity, "a couch," or "a condition," *e.g.* of sleep, or of suffering.

‖ Or, A Psalm giving instruction of the sons, &c.

PSALM XLII.

1 *David's zeal to serve God in the temple.* 5 *He encourageth his soul to trust in God.*

To the chief Musician, ‖ Maschil, for the sons of Korah.

AS the hart † panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

† Heb. *brayeth.*

2 My soul thirsteth for God, for

SECOND BOOK. PSALMS XLII.—LXXII.

PSALM XLII.

This psalm is attributed in the inscription to the sons of Korah. The circumstances under which it was composed are marked with more than usual distinctness. The Psalmist was in exile, far from the house of God, in deep affliction, living among an ungodly and hostile people, in a district belong-

the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

3 [a] My tears have been my meat day and night, while they conti-

[a] Ps. 80. 5.

ing to the mountainous region of Hermon, to the east of Jordan. In this and in the following psalm, which is closely connected with it, and most probably a continuation or second part, the writer expresses a confident hope of again approaching the altar of God, and praising Him upon the harp.

All these indications point to the time when David and his faithful followers fled from Absalom. It is, as Dean Stanley remarks ('S. P.' p. 329), the only time when the whole interest of Israelitish history is transferred to the trans-Jordanic territory. The people that came with David spread themselves out beyond the cultivated table-lands into the wilderness of the steppes of the Hauran. The exceeding beauty of the psalm [in Ewald's judgment (p. 257) superior to all in form and imagery] assures us that it was composed by a man of unsurpassed genius; and many points of resemblance with other psalms, noted by Delitzsch, p. 301, might justify us in assuming that man to be David. The eighty-fourth psalm, which is also attributed to the sons of Korah, and bears so close a resemblance to this as to make it all but certain that it was composed by the same author, appears to be the production of a king in exile (see *v.* 9); scarcely, however, as Ewald conjectures, of Jeconiah, whose place of exile was certainly not in the trans-Jordanic district, but in all probability of David. The expression of feeling is in most respects appropriate to the character of David and to his position. These considerations are not indeed conclusive; and some peculiarities of diction, more especially the use of the divine name Elohim (Jehovah occurring once only), may point to one of the family of Korah, who was specially attached to the king, and deeply imbued with his spirit. In that case it may be inferred that when the Psalmist composed it he was for a season separated from David, and sojourning in an outlying district, among a people of rude, wild habits, if not disaffected to the king, yet feeling little sympathy with the national religion, and no regard for its ministers. The psalm cannot have been written during the captivity, when there was no altar or sanctuary at Jerusalem; nor is there any period in the history of the kings of Judah in which such a combination of circumstances can be regarded as probable.

The psalm consists of two parts. The first, 1—5, expresses longing, distress, and hope: the second, 6—11, repeats those feelings with increased intensity, and more specific allusions to the cause and form of the Psalmist's affliction. Each part may be subdivided into two strophes, marking distinctly the rhythmical and lyrical character of the composition, which (as Kimchi, on Ps. iii., suggests) was probably adapted to the temple service, after the return from exile.

1. *As the hart panteth*] Or, "longeth." This is probably the true meaning of the word, which occurs once only in the rest of the Bible, Joel i. 20 (where A.V. has "cry"). In Arabic it is common in the sense of ascending, turning towards, and earnestly desiring (Freytag and Willmet, s. v.). An upward longing movement of the soul towards the object of its intense desire is thus vividly described. All the ancient versions, with the exception of the Syriac, and most modern critics accept this meaning both here and in Joel. The marg. "brayeth" has the Syriac in its support, and is defended by Hupfeld, and by Dr Kay who says that it is used specially of the cry of the antelope or gazelle, for which, however, no authority is adduced from Hebrew or the cognate dialects. Gesenius compares ὀρύγω, and Dr Kay notices the name ὄρυξ, which resembles the Hebrew in form, but has an Aryan etymology. "Braying," however, is an expression far less appropriate to the soul than "panting."

water brooks] Or, "water-courses." The word literally means deep channels, or ravines, such as are common on both sides of the Jordan, both in the Negeb, and cutting through the highlands on the east, forming the beds of streams which are much swollen during the rainy season, or after a thunderstorm. The Hebrew (aphik) is preserved in the names of many places in Syria and Palestine. See an excellent account of these ravines in Wilton's 'Negeb,' p. 26—31. He adds, "that the gazelle is constantly found resorting to these rocky ravines, in quest, doubtless, of the pools of water left here and there by the winter torrents." See also notes on Job vi. 15—18.

2. *the living God*] The source and sustainer of all life, see *v.* 8, "the God of my life:" probably, however, not without reference to the expression "living waters," the quickening and restorative streams for which the thirsty soul longeth. The same expression is found in Ps. lxxxiv. 2; Deut. v. 26; Josh. iii. 10; 1 S. xvii. 26 (where see note); 2 K. xix. 4; Hos. i. 10. The epithet is not applied to God in the New Testament, save as in 1 Thess. i. 9, in contrast with idols.

before God] Sc. in the temple, or tabernacle, a common idiom (see Exod. xxxiv. 23; Ps. lxxxiv. 7), which well expresses the intense realization of God's Presence in the sanctuary. This is not incompatible with a firm belief in His omnipresence, but the feeling of emptiness and darkness may seem specially characteristic of a Levite in exile.

3. *my meat*] Classical writers have the

nually say unto me, Where *is* thy God?

4 When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

5 Why art thou †cast down, O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet ‖praise him ‖*for* the help of his countenance.

6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from ‖the hill Mizar.

7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy

† Heb. *bowed down*

‖ Or, *give thanks*.

‖ Or, *his presence is salvation*.

‖ Or, *the little hill*.

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same figure. "Cura, dolorque animi, lacrimæque alimenta fuere," Ovid, 'Met.' x. 288. Compare Job iii. 24; Ps. cii. 9.

4. *When I remember*] This does not correctly express the connection of thought. It should be **those things will I remember, and I will pour out my soul upon me.** I will turn my thoughts to other things, to the loved and unforgotten past, and will let my feelings overflow in a stream of devout affection. The expression "pour out" is specially used of the outpouring of the soul in prayer; cf. Pss. lxii. 8, cii. title; 1 S. i. 15; Lam. ii. 19.

for I had gone, &c.] Or, **how I passed on in the throng; how I preceded them to the house of God.** Two very peculiar words are used, the former probably denoting a dense crowd of pilgrims, the latter stately, onward movement in a public procession: both were probably idiomatic in the mouth of a Levite. The word here rendered "preceded" (Dr Kay has "marched") occurs only in Isai. xxxviii. 15, where the A.V. has "go softly." Aquila προβιβάζων αὐτούς: the other versions omit the word.

a multitude that kept holyday] Or, **keeping festival.** The same expression is used in Exod. xxiii. 14, where the A.V. has "keep a feast." The clause describes a vast crowd of worshippers, pilgrims from all parts of Palestine, assembled at Jerusalem for the three great festivals. Compare a very similar passage in Isai. xxx. 29. These processions were usually made with the accompaniments of music and song, such as are described in 2 S. vi. 5. Although all the expressions in this verse well befit a Levite, they are not less appropriate in the mouth of David, and in fact may seem peculiarly to describe the feelings and habits of a king, who was not merely a spectator or worshipper, but the leader of public devotions.

5. *cast down*] The form of the Hebrew word is very peculiar, and occurs in no other passage. It conveys the impression of utter prostration. Our Lord describes His own agony in words used by the LXX. in translating this and the preceding verse, περίλυπος, συνταράσσω; Matt. xxvi. 38; Joh. xii. 27.

O my soul] The exceeding beauty of this address to the soul rests upon a deep truth of inward experience. The higher spiritual principle controls and guides the emotions. Calvin, "castigat suam mollitiem."

disquieted in me] Or, **why moanest thou over me?** The Hebrew word expresses noise and turmoil: the soul bewailing the woes of the Psalmist. Cf. Job xiv. 22, note.

hope] Or, **wait thou for God.** There is a shade of difference between the two words: "to wait" implies patient submissive expectation, bound up with hope, and indeed a form of hope, but with less of brightness than of resignation. In Job xiii. 15 (where see note) the A.V. has "trust."

for the help of his countenance] This expresses the meaning of the Hebrew text as it stands: but see Note below.

6. *therefore*] The prostration of spirit serves but to bring God's former mercies to remembrance.

the land of Jordan] The trans-Jordanic region.

the Hermonites] Lit. **the Hermons:** the expression, which occurs nowhere else, probably denotes the mountain-ridges which extend in a southerly direction to the east of the Jordan. One of the heights may have borne the name Mizar, *i.e.* small, but there are no traces of such a name, and it may have been, as suggested in the marg., an appellative. The notice might seem to imply that the psalm was not written near Mahanaim. It is, however, possible that the term "Hermons" includes the mountainous district from Hermon to the Dead Sea, and it is certain that the heights of that great mountain are visible to that extent.

7. *Deep calleth unto deep*, &c.] This description might seem to refer to a storm at sea, huge waves rolling on continuously, the waters of heaven and of ocean meeting in waterspouts (cf. Jonah ii. 3): but the imagery appears to be strictly local. The word rendered "waterspouts" occurs elsewhere (2 S. v. 8, where A.V. has "gutter") probably in the sense of a watercourse, or trench cut in the rock: here it seems to designate the deep ravines which cleave the highlands of the trans-Jordanic district. Lynch describes a storm which burst

waves and thy billows are gone over me.

8 *Yet* the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song *shall be* with me, *and* my prayer unto the God of my life.

9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

10 *As* with a [1] sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where *is* thy God?

11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

[1] Or, *killing.*

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upon him, while passing through one of these ravines, in terms which might seem to have been written in order to illustrate this passage. "The black and threatening clouds soon enveloped the mountain-tops, the lightning playing across it in incessant flashes, while the loud thunder reverberated from side to side of the appalling chasm. Between the peals we soon heard a roaring and continuous sound. It was the torrent from the rain-cloud, sweeping in a long line of foam down the steep declivity, bearing huge fragments of rocks, which, striking against each other, sounded like thunder." 'Expedition to the Jordan and Dead Sea,' quoted by Wilton, 'Negeb,' pp. 26, 27.

all thy waves, &c.] These words occur without a change in Jonah ii. 3. There can be no doubt that either the Psalmist took them from the Prophet, or *vice versâ*. The general originality of this beautiful psalm is in favour of the latter alternative; such words would naturally recur to the prophet's mind in his affliction: thus he quotes the eighteenth and other psalms repeatedly, *e.g.* xxxi. 22; the question will be more fully discussed in the notes on Jonah.

8. *command his lovingkindness*] Cf. Ps. xliv. 4, lxviii. 28.

in the night his song shall be with me] Job xxxv. 10, "God my maker, who giveth songs in the night."

9. *I will say*] The form of the Hebrew word betokens desire, "I would fain say."

my rock] Ps. xviii. 2; a steep cliff, inaccessible to foes, is meant.

mourning] Ps. xxxv. 14: lit. black, clad in mourning raiment, or in gloom of spirit.

oppression] The expression does not imply that the Psalmist was in captivity, but that he was surrounded by men who hated him. It would be quite suitable to the position of a follower of David at some distant outpost.

10. *As with a sword in my bones*] Or, **As it were breaking my bones.** Thus Isai. xxxviii. 13, "As a lion so will he break all my bones." The Hebrew word (*retsach*) is used for murder in the 6th Commandment, and in Ps. lxii. 3, "ye shall be slain." Dr Kay "as with a dagger stroke." Breaking or crushing appears to be the true meaning of the word. Thus in Arabic رضخ magnâ cum vi percussit: Freyt. s.v.

NOTES on PSALM XLII. 4, 5.

4. אדדם. The Masoretic punctuation makes this to be the Hithpael of an obsolete root: but Hupfeld observes that the suffix could not be accounted for; and that either the points must be altered, so as to give the Piel, or the suffix must be omitted: the former alternative is preferable, the points being in fact purely exegetical, while the letters are preserved by tradition, and are not to be altered without necessity; the difficulty of the reading is in favour of its authenticity. The Arabic derivation is quite uncertain.

5. A very slight alteration, not of the letters, but of the points (פני ואלהי for פניו אלהי), would give the same clause with which both this and the following psalm end, "the health of my countenance (sc. my salvation) and my God." The emendation is highly probable; it is supported by the Alexandrian codex of the LXX., the Vulg., Syr. and Arab., and by most modern critics. Dr Kay defends the present text.

PSALM XLIII.

1 *David, praying to be restored to the temple, promiseth to serve God joyfully.* 5 *He encourageth his soul to trust in God.*

JUDGE me, O God, and plead my cause against an [1] ungodly nation: O deliver me † from the deceitful and unjust man.

[1] Or, *unmerciful.*
† Heb. *from a man of deceit and iniquity.*

2 For thou *art* the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

3 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

4 Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God †my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

† Heb. *the gladness of my joy.*

5 [a]Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

[a] Ps. 42. 5, 11.

PSALM XLIV.

1 *The church, in memory of former favours,* 7 *complaineth of their present evils.* 17 *Professing her integrity,* 23 *she fervently prayeth for succour.*

To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

WE have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told

PSALM XLIII.

This psalm is admitted to be a continuation of the preceding one. It has the same metre, the same refrain, and refers to the same circumstances, oppression of enemies, banishment from the sanctuary, and a sure hope of deliverance and restoration. If not actually the completion of the psalm (which is most probable, and is represented by some good MSS.), it must have been composed by the same author, and at the same time.

1. *Judge me, O God*] Cf. Pss. vii. 8, xxvi. 1.

plead] Cf. note on xxxv. 1.

ungodly nation] Or, "a nation not pious," without religious principles or feelings. The people among whom the Psalmist was sojourning were probably a mixed race of wild, rude habits, such as at a later period occupied the district to the east of the Sea of Galilee.

man] It is uncertain whether, as in other psalms, an individual is singled out as leader and representative of the wicked; but the word may be taken collectively.

2. This verse repeats with slight variations the thoughts and even words of Ps. xlii. 9.

3. *thy light and thy truth*] Dr Kay suggests that this refers to the Urim and Thummim, and observes that David had sent back the ark with Zadok the high-priest to Jerusalem, 2 S. xv. 25. There is a slight, but perhaps significant, difference between the expression used here and in Pss. xl. 11, lvii. 3, both Davidic psalms.

thy holy hill] Mount Zion, where the sanctuary was placed in David's reign; see note on Ps. iii. 4.

tabernacles] At a later period a Psalmist would probably have said Thy Temple. Of the two words for tent or tabernacle he chooses that which signifies "indwelling:" the place where God manifests His presence.

4. *God my exceeding joy*] Lit. "the God of the joy of my exultation," source and sustainer of all gladness and bliss; a singularly emphatic combination, such as St Paul delights in: see *e.g.* 2 Cor. i. 3—6.

5. The refrain of the preceding psalm, repeated without any variation, but with a fulness of meaning, a certainty that the vows made in trouble will be offered on the Altar of God, and the hymn of thanksgiving with the accompaniment of sacred music will be accepted.

Ewald's concluding observations on these two psalms (p. 257) shew a deep and hearty appreciation of their beauty. "The two voices (of despondency and trust), which at the beginning stand out in entire discord and almost harsh antagonism (2—6), are at last brought into loving harmony, so that emotion and insight, excitement and thoughtfulness are wholly reconciled, and are intimately blended. All this without artifice or constraint; the true expression of the struggles between two contending forces in a spirit at once susceptible to tenderest feeling, yet upon reflection full of strength. The art consists wholly in the highest naturalness, and the purest inspiration. The imagery also in all its details is in the highest degree tender and poetical."

PSALM XLIV.

The circumstances under which this psalm was composed are described with more than usual minuteness. The national army had gone forth, but had sustained a severe reverse; the enemy had taken much spoil; multitudes had been slain, or scattered among the heathens; adjoining nations exulted in the disgrace of the Israelites, who were overwhelmed with shame and confusion; 9—17. On the other hand, the nation as a whole had been faithful to their covenant with God, were guiltless of idolatry, and throughout their trial could appeal to His knowledge of their sincerity, 17—22. Their representatives therefore felt themselves justified in pleading God's mercies, 1—3, finding in them a sure pledge of deliverance and victory, 4—8.

Considerable importance attaches to the question, to what period and circumstances

us, *what* work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

2 *How* thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

3 For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

4 Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

5 Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

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in the history of Israel such a description is applicable. It is the psalm which critics of very different schools have assigned with the greatest confidence to the Maccabean period; and there can be no doubt that, as a psalm peculiarly adapted to express the feelings of the people at that time, it was continually in their mouths. Then, in fact, Levites daily in the pulpits stood up and cried aloud, "Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord?" *v.* 23; hence called "awakeners." But there are insuperable objections to the hypothesis. The period of the Maccabees had been preceded by a general, all but universal apostasy; the only defeat sustained by the armies of Judas Maccabeus was in an expedition undertaken by two generals, Joseph and Azariah, *against* his express orders, and in a spirit of envy and vainglory, see 1 Macc. v. 56—62; Judas M. himself had contracted an alliance with Rome, wholly incompatible with the exclusive reliance on the Lord expressed in *vv.* 4—7: nor, had this psalm been written after his death, is it probable that all allusion to such a calamity would have been wanting. To these objections it must be added that the style of the psalm belongs to the best age of Hebrew; that the notice of Korahites points to a period preceding the captivity; and that even supposing that the Canon may not have been absolutely closed before the Maccabean age, it is not probable that a psalm composed then should have been inserted among others which are unquestionably ancient.

To other conjectural dates forcible objections may be urged. The psalm could scarcely refer to the defeat of Josiah, since notice of his death would certainly have formed its most prominent characteristic (cf. 2 K. xxiii. 29 ff., Zech. xii. 11); nor was that king's expedition undertaken for religious objects: see *v.* 22, and compare 2 Chro. xxxv. 22. Jehoiakim, whose capture is supposed by some to have given occasion to this and to some other psalms, "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord," 2 Chro. xxxvi. 5. The ravages of the Philistines and Arabians in Jehoram's reign were "a plague" inflicted for the idolatry of the king and his people; see 2 Chro. xxi. 12—17.

Upon the whole the most probable date is that which is naturally suggested by the mention of the Korahites, and by the place of this psalm in the Psalter; together with other notices, which indicate the reign of David, when the nation, as such, was free from idolatry, and engaged in frequent wars. An occasion is suggested by the inscription of Ps. lx., which records an event, passed over in the brief accounts in Kings and Chron.; viz. an incursion of Edomites, while David was engaged in the Syrian campaign. From incidental notices we learn that the Israelites then suffered severely, losing so vast a number that Joab was sent to bury the slain while David completed the subjugation of Edom; compare 2 S. viii. 13 (where Edom should be read, LXX. τὴν Ἰδουμαίαν, for Aram, *i.e.* Syria); Ps. lx. inscription, and 1 K. xi. 15. No other period can be pointed out which accounts more satisfactorily for the combination of most opposite feelings, humiliation and confidence, mourning and hope, earnest remonstrance and unshaken trust.

The psalm has three main divisions, very distinctly marked; at the end of *v.* 8 by Selah, and of 16 and 22 by change of tone. The strophes are of unequal length, increasing or shortening in accordance with the Psalmist's feelings.

1. *our fathers have told us*] In accordance with the injunctions frequently recorded in the Pentateuch, *e.g.* Exod. x. 2, xii. 26, 27, xiii. 8, 10; cf. Ps. lxxviii. 3.

2. *plantedst*] Exod. xv. 17.

cast them out] Thus the LXX., Vulg., but most commentators render it "but Thou didst spread them out," sc. the Israelites, like the branches of a great tree; cf. Ps. lxxx. 9—13.

3. See Deut. viii. 17; Josh. xxiv. 12.

4. *my King*] Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 5, and note on Ps. xx. 9.

command, &c.] As an act of kingly might: cf. Lev. xxv. 21; Deut. xxviii. 8; Ps. cxxxiii. 3.

5. *push down*] The Hebrew word applies properly to horned beasts, the wild bull, bisons, &c., frequently taken as symbols of strength and force, see Deut. xxxiii. 17. The expression shews that the power of the nation was not broken, and that the reverse, though severe, was but temporary.

6 For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

7 But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.

8 In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.

9 But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.

10 Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us spoil for themselves.

11 Thou hast given us †like sheep *appointed* for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen.

12 Thou sellest thy people †for nought, and dost not increase *thy wealth* by their price.

13 [a]Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

14 [b]Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.

15 My confusion *is* continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,

16 For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger.

17 All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.

† Heb. *as sheep of meat.*
† Heb. *without riches.*
[a] Ps. 79. 4.
[b] Jer. 24. 9.

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tread them under] continues the metaphor; for the fulfilment of the hope, see 2 S. viii. 13, 14.

9—16. The transition of thought is sudden, abrupt, vehement; true as all that has been said may be, yet a great and terrible blow has been inflicted, and the people are yet enduring the consequences.

9. *our armies*] The expression implies the actual existence of considerable armies, such as Judah did not possess after the reign of David, at any time which critics have fixed upon for the composition of this psalm.

11. *scattered*] The defeat appears to have taken place beyond the frontier, so that the fugitives were driven among the neighbouring tribes. All the expressions indicate a fearful defeat and slaughter, but not a conquest, certainly not a capture of Jerusalem. The expression scarcely seems applicable to the selling of Israelitish captives, of which there are notices under the early kings; sc. by the Tyrians, Joel iii. 6; and by the Philistines of Gaza, Amos i. 6. This psalm was evidently sung while the invasion was still proceeding.

12. *for nought*] This exactly expresses the meaning of the Hebrew; lit. "for no-wealth." There may possibly be a reference to a Hebrew father's right to dispose of his children (so Hupf.); but it more probably indicates a feeling that a people so cast off are treated as worthless. Compare Deut. xxxii. 30; Judg. ii. 14, iii. 8, iv. 2, 9: to the first of which passages the Psalmist not improbably refers. It may be that the assertion that God gains nothing by giving up His people has a still deeper meaning, and implies that He must have a special intention, viz. of testing their faith, or bringing them to repentance: in correlation with this phrase is the equally frequent statement that when tried, and restored, they are ransomed without price. Both thoughts occur constantly in the prophets; see Isai. xlv. 13, lii. 3; Jer. xv. 13.

13. *a reproach*] For corresponding expressions cf. Ps. xxxix. 8, lxxix. 4, lxxxix. 41; Neh. ii. 17. The Psalmist exhausts the terms for such insults as at every season of national calamity were heaped upon Israel by Philistines, Edomites, and the "children of Lot."

14. *a byword*] This word expresses very accurately the sense of the Hebrew "mashal" (generally rendered "proverb"), which includes all sententious or proverbial sayings; cf. Job xvii. 6.

16. *avenger*] Lit. **him that taketh vengeance.** The expression is specific, and probably implies that the war was carried on by the enemy to recover lost territory, or to avenge former defeats. This applies to a time such as that of David, when the Israelites made foreign excursions, but less aptly to that of the Maccabees.

17. *yet have we not forgotten thee*] The whole of this very remarkable passage claims for the Israelites not only freedom from the old national tendency to idolatry, but thorough sincerity in religion, and consistent integrity of life. The only time at which such a description could have been used with propriety must have been one of national reformation; not, however, preceded by apostasy, as was the case in the time of Josiah, and still more so in that of the Maccabees; but a thorough, earnest, and successful reformation, such as was undoubtedly that which took place in the early part of David's reign at Jerusalem. The Korahites might well have composed and sung the psalm at that time, after a severe, though temporary reverse, as a solemn act of national supplication.

18 Our heart is not turned back, neither have our †steps declined from thy way;

19 Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

20 If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god;

21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

22 *c*Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

23 Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast *us* not off for ever.

24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, *and* forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

26 Arise †for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

† Heb. *a help for us.*

PSALM XLV.

1 *The majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom.* 10 *The duty of the church, and the benefits thereof.*

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, ‖ Maschil, A Song of loves.

‖ Or, *of instruction.*

MY heart †is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things

† Heb. *boileth,* or, *bubbleth up.*

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19. *the place of dragons*] **the place of jackals**: the place where jackals troop together to prey upon the bodies of the slain. Ps. lxiii. 10. Hitzig would identify this with the country about Jamnia, where jackals are said to abound; but the description would be equally applicable to any district in Palestine; and is especially suitable to the field, which the defeated army could not for a time approach even to bury the corpses of their comrades.

20. Compare the protestations of Job, ch. xxxi.

21. *search this out*] This implies far more than a mere suppression of idolatrous worship. The writer must have felt that the nation, as a whole, was clear of the guilt of apostasy. For the expressions cf. Ps. cxxxix. 1; Jer. xvii. 10; Job xxxi. 14.

22. *for thy sake*] This verse supplies the strongest argument for the Maccabean date: but in truth it is equally suitable to that of David. In the king's mind, and in that of the Levites, the cause of Israel was the cause of God: they fought for Him, and died for Him. For St Paul's application of the words see marg. ref.

23. *Awake*] This bold address occurs frequently in the psalms, *e.g.* vii. 6, xxxv. 23, lix. 4, 5.

why sleepest thou] The sleep of God, a bold metaphor, implies an apparent suspension of His providential government, when His foes are triumphant, and His servants defeated. It suggests, however, that the suspension is but temporary, and has more of hope than despondency. The Psalmist knows that "He who keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps."

O Lord] Not Jehovah, but Adonai: the Psalmist does not use the Name which specially recalls the spiritual covenant, but one which implies dominion: he appeals to the King and God of the nation.

25. Cf. Ps. cxix. 25.

PSALM XLV.

This psalm celebrates the nuptials of an anointed king. It describes him as beautiful and gracious, blessed for evermore; as a conqueror, whose objects are truth, humility, and righteousness; as a divine person, bearing the name of God, seated on an everlasting throne, ruling in righteousness, anointed with the oil of gladness, received with the strains of harps in ivory palaces: his bride is a king's daughter, one of a foreign race, beautiful and glorious; her attendants are pure virgins; her children are to be princes in all the earth.

Most of the later commentators, including some of undoubted soundness, hold this to be a bridal hymn written for the nuptials of a king of Israel or Judah: but the imagery, though it may have been suggested by such an event, is in many points utterly unsuitable, and the direct ascription of divinity to an earthly king is contrary to the usage and spirit of the Hebrew scriptures. Some have suggested Ahab, others Jehoram (both on account of the connection with Tyre through Jezebel and Athaliah); a notion which scarcely needs refutation, but which proves how strongly the objection to Solomon is felt by those who maintain it. Against Solomon it may be urged that he was emphatically a prince of peace, and that gifts betokening submission would not have been offered by the Tyrians on the occasion of his marrying an Egyptian princess. These objections together, especially the first, are fatal. There remains no other alternative but to take the old traditional interpretation of the Hebrew church, confirmed by the authority of the New Testament (Heb. i. 8, 9) and accepted by Michaelis, Rosenmüller,

which I have made touching the king: my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

3 Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, O *most* mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

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and other writers; and to regard this psalm as directly Messianic. See Introduction, § 18. The ideal which floats before the mind of the writer is that of a Prince combining all the characteristics of the best kings of Judah with a divine nature, such as is distinctly intimated in ancient prophecies. The daughter of the King is the nation in its religious aspect, or the Church: her attendants, the honourable women, themselves also daughters of kings, represent foreign nations brought into willing submission to the Messiah. The dominion of the King and of the Bride administered by their royal offspring (see note on *v.* 16) extends to the ends of the earth, and will endure to the end of time.

The psalm consists of two principal parts, with a brief introduction and conclusion. From 2 to 9 the glory of the King is described; from 10 to 17 the beauty and splendour of the Bride, to whom exhortations and promises are addressed. The structure, as Köster points out, is highly artistic: 1, 1, 3; 3, 1, 3, 3, 1, 1: divided into two parts by *v.* 9, each part with similar strophes, but in reversed order.

Inscription — *Shoshannim*] *i.e.* lilies: as in Pss. lxix., lxxx., see also lx. Probably the tune or melody to which the psalm was sung or recited, but the word may be metaphorical, equivalent to beautiful maidens, brides or bridesmaids: and the meaning may be a psalm to be recited to a melody adapted to a bridal solemnity. The combination of "Maschil," a song of instruction, with "a song of loves" is peculiar, and indicates probably the religious and mystic character of this psalm.

A certain sacredness attaches to the lily; "lily-work was on the capitals of the pillars Jachin and Boaz, 1 K. vii. 19, 22, and on the brim of the molten sea, ib. 26." Kay.

1. *My heart*, &c.] Such an introduction is peculiar to psalms of high and solemn import, and is not found in those which refer to personal feelings, or to temporary occasions.

is inditing] Or, **utters**. The Hebrew word occurs only in this passage, but it undoubtedly means "gushes," bubbles up, like boiling water, or a spring, stirred and forced by an inner commotion of joyful feelings: contrast Ps. xxxix. 1, 2.

a good matter] **a good word**, *i.e.* a beautiful utterance, a hymn full of goodness and joy, gushing out from the full heart.

I speak of the things] The Hebrew gives a different and more forcible meaning: **I speak; my works are for the King**, *i.e.* I speak (moved by an inward impulse), and all my words have but one object, the praise of the King. The word rendered "works" exactly corresponds to poem (*ποίηματα*, Theod.), that which a poet makes. Köster refers it to the artistic structure, see above: Dr Kay connects it with the wrought tapestry of the tabernacle, to which the same word is applied in Exod. xxvi. 1, and elsewhere.

my tongue] The tongue expresses the inward thought fluently, rapidly, either "as a short-hand writer" (employed at a very early period), or "as a well-instructed scribe." The LXX. *γραμματεὺς ὀξυγράφος.* Thus Ezra is called "a ready scribe" (סופר מהיר), vii. 6.

2. *fairer*] The beauty of the King is placed first with peculiar fitness in a bridal hymn; but the beauty here spoken of is a divine attribute; the word is the same in derivation as that applied to Jehovah, Ps. l. 2, but even stronger in its form, which occurs in no other passage. Beauty was regarded by the Hebrew as the outward manifestation of inherent nobleness, or of a nature akin to the divine. In this case the beauty is expressly said to be above that of man, an expression which marks the object of the hymn, as One standing apart from and above those whose nature He shares. The representation is unquestionably ideal: it refers to the Messiah. Compare Isai. xxxiii. 17. Thus the Chaldee paraphrast, "Thy beauty, O King Messiah, is greater than that of the sons of men." Cf. Song of Sol. v. 10.

grace] The grace of sweetness, loveliness, all that is attractive and gracious in expression, has its seat upon the lips of the King; from such lips none but gracious words can flow; the anointing Spirit dwells upon them: cf. Luke iv. 18, 22, where the word is used with special reference to Isai. lxi. 1—3.

therefore] The blessing is inseparable from the spiritual gifts and graces visibly represented in the Person of the Glorified Messiah; such a declaration would hardly have been made of a mere earthly king.

for ever] See *vv.* 6, 17.

3. *O most mighty, with thy glory*] Thus Ps. xxiv. 8, 10, *twice* of the King of Glory; see also Isai. ix. 6, where the same word, combined with El, is applied to the Messiah. The Psalmist bids the King gird on his sword, and array himself with glory and

† Heb. *prosper thou, ride thou.*

4 And in thy majesty †ride prosperously because of truth and meekness *and* righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5 Thine arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee.

ᵃ Hebr. 1. 8.

6 ᵃThy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.

7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

8 All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory

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majesty, the attributes of God (see Ps. xcvi. 7), of which those of Messiah, and of the king as type of Messiah (see xxi. 5), are the reflection. The sword of Messiah (the sharp two-edged sword of Revelation, i. 16, and xix. 15) is the Word of God. See Isai. xlix. 2; Heb. iv. 12. Dr Kay takes "thy glory and thy majesty" to be in apposition to "sword."

4. *ride prosperously*] Literally, "prosper, ride;" but the word for "prosper" means rather "go forth," "break forth," and the word rendered "ride" means either "drive a war-chariot," or "ride a war-horse." The King goes forth, like the Sun (see Ps. xix. 4—6), "conquering and to conquer," Rev. vi. 2.

because of] *i.e.* for the sake of truth, and the meekness which is one with righteousness. The combination of the two words meekness and righteousness is marked by a singular construction in the Hebrew; the two attributes are, so to speak, identified. The one object of the wars of God's Anointed is to make the attributes incarnate in Him triumphant; cf. Zech. ix. 9.

thy right hand shall teach] The right hand is personified: the course of the warrior is cleared for him by his own achievements; his right hand, so to speak, leads the warrior onward, and may be said by a bold figure to teach him the terrible things which it executes.

5. The construction of this verse is rather difficult, but the meaning is clear: **Thine arrows are sharp—peoples fall under thee—in the heart of the enemies of the King.** The Psalmist sees the battle-field, the sharp arrows fly, the people fall; he looks, there are the arrows in their hearts. The vividness of the description is lost by a prosaic translation which supplies the ellipses.

6. *Thy throne, O God*] This is the literal, and grammatical construction. The King is addressed as God (thus Aq. ὁ θρόνος σου, θεέ: the other Greek Vv. have the same meaning, ὁ θεός). Feeling that such words could not possibly be addressed to an earthly king, commentators have suggested other interpretations; such as "thy throne (is a throne of) God:" but it is certain that no such explanation would have been thought of, had not a doctrinal bias intervened. The word "God" is applied to kings, and even to judges, as representatives of the divine power and justice; see Exod. xxi. 6, xxii. 8 (Heb.); Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6; but never in a direct address as in this and in the following verse. The Person before the Psalmist's mind was a visible manifestation of the Godhead; the ideal King of Whom his earthly sovereign was an imperfect type. The objection that the Messiah is never called God or addressed as God in the Old Testament, begs the entire question and is untrue (see Isai. viii. 8, "O Immanuel"). Other explanations of this passage are contrary to its plain and literal meaning. On the whole passage see Dr Pusey, 'Daniel the Prophet,' pp. 470, 471, and Liddon, who quotes him, 'Bampton Lectures,' p. 182.

for ever and ever] The strongest possible terms are here used to denote absolute eternity.

the sceptre, &c.] Compare the address to God, Ps. lxvii. 4, and see xcvi. 10.

7. *God, thy God*] The old Vv. and most interpreters take "God" and "Thy God" to be in apposition. The construction, however, is unusual, and the more natural interpretation would be, "Therefore, O God, Thy God hath anointed Thee." This agrees with the preceding verse, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." The Version in the Prayer-book inserts "even" before "thy God." Our Version faithfully represents the original, and leaves the question as to the construction unsettled. The Hebrew punctuation is in favour of the ordinary translation, and probably suggested it: but at the utmost it represents the Masoretic tradition; on which see critical Note to Ps. xxii. 16.

oil of gladness] *i.e.* with joy symbolized on festive occasions by precious unguents. The gladness flows (like Aaron's "precious ointment," Ps. cxxxiii. 2) from the head of the King to the skirts of His raiment; it is diffused over every portion of His mystic body.

above thy fellows] *i.e.* above all other kings. See 1 K. iii. 11—13; where God declares to Solomon "There shall not be any among the kings like unto thee."

8. *All thy garments*, &c.] Lit. "Myrrh and aloes, cassia are all thy garments," so impregnated with precious odours that they are, so to speak, woven out of them; nought

palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

9 Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he *is* thy Lord; and worship thou him.

12 And the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* with a gift; *even* the rich among the people shall intreat †thy favour.

† Heb. thy face

13 The king's daughter *is* all glorious within: her clothing *is* of wrought gold.

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but odours themselves. The passion for costly scents has always been characteristic of Orientals.

whereby] The Hebrew is not quite clear, but the latter half of the verse may probably be rendered "from palaces of ivory strains of harps delight thee." As the bridegroom enters the palace, where the queen awaits him, the minstrels welcome him with their harps. There is frequent mention of ivory in the Bible; even of an ivory palace, as in 1 K. xxii. 39; Amos iii. 15; see also Song Sol. vii. 4. The mention of palaces, however, not one, but several, agrees with the ideal, or Messianic interpretation. It is improbable that Solomon, in whose reign ivory appears first to have been imported (see 1 K. x. 22), or any of his successors possessed buildings constructed of so rare and precious a material. N.B. The explanation of מני as equivalent to מן with an ellipsis of the relative pronoun is now generally abandoned, but is defended by Dr Kay.

9. *thy honourable women*] Lit. "Thy precious ones," "Thy jewels." It could scarcely be said of any of the later kings of Judah that kings' daughters were among the attendants upon his queen. One of David's wives was the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur (2 S. iii. 3); the daughter of Pharaoh is the only wife of Solomon whose royal parentage is recorded. Like other peculiar traits in the description this is wholly ideal; it has its true, though mystical interpretation, in the Churches which recognize in Christ their Lord.

upon thy right hand did stand] See 1 K. ii. 19.

the queen] The Hebrew word is not that which is generally used to designate the queens of Israelitish princes. It is a poetical word, and denotes a peculiarity in the choice and position of the bride. Mystically it must refer to the Church, but in her perfect purity and unity, as she is described in the book of Revelation, xix. 7, 8. xxi. 2.

in gold of Ophir] See note on Job xxviii. 16, and 1 K. ix. 28. From 1 Chro. xxix. 4, it appears that "gold of Ophir" was well-known in David's time.

10. *Hearken*] The earnestness of this threefold address is peculiarly suitable to the occasion: how difficult to gain the attention of the bride, how needful to make her fully conscious of the complete change of sphere, involving the disruption of old ties, and the entire surrender of heart to new duties. Equally true and forcible is the application to the Church; she has one work, to give herself up to Christ; one sacrifice to make—that of all associations and bonds alien to Him. Moll regards this address as inapplicable to the Jewish Church, and draws from it an argument against the Messianic interpretation of the psalm, but the Church, as such, is invariably represented as taken out of the heathen world; even of the race of Israel it is said, their "fathers served other gods." Josh. xxiv. 15: see too Deut. xxvi. 5.

O daughter] A form of address at once tender, affectionate, and peculiarly appropriate. The Queen is at the transition point from maidenhood to womanhood: just entering the King's palace with old associations lingering in her spirit, which give a peculiar charm to this word of gracious welcome.

11. *So shall the king*] The love of the King is thus represented as won by the love of the Bride; that alone makes her other charms attractive.

thy Lord] This of course would be true of the bride of an Israelitish king, and the word rendered worship is used of the obeisance offered unto a king by his wife (see *e.g.* 1 K. i. 16); but it has a peculiar significance as applied to the relation between Christ and His Church.

12. *And the daughter of Tyre*] The Psalmist has before him the daughter of Tyre (representing the wealth of the heathen world): her princely merchants offer gifts, tokens of willing submission and allegiance to the queen. The only historical events to which such a statement could possibly apply are the marriages of Solomon, and of Jehoram, who married Athaliah the granddaughter of a king of Tyre. Certainly *that* alliance would not be celebrated by Korahites, moved by the Spirit of God.

13. *all glorious within*] **all glory inwardly.** The commentators generally take this to mean "in the inner chamber of the palace," where the bride first takes off her

14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.

17 I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

PSALM XLVI.

1 *The confidence which the church hath in God.* 8 *An exhortation to behold it.*

To the chief Musician ‖for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth. ‖Or, *of.*

GOD *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though

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veil and shews herself in all the glory of personal charms and bridal apparel: nor is this less applicable to the true Bride whose beauty will only be really discerned when she enters the Eternal Palace. The word rendered "within" has certainly that meaning Lev. x. 18; but, as Dr Kay justly observes, the Hebrew word is used of the interior cedar lining of the Holy Place, and of the gold lining of the Holy of Holies, 1 K. vi. 18, 22: an application which entirely justifies our A.V. in its most natural meaning.

of wrought gold] Woven with threads of gold. Thus Virgil describes the robes "quas —læta laborum Ipsa suis quondam manibus Sidonia Dido Fecerat, et tenui telas discreverat auro." 'Æn.' XI. 73.

14. *brought unto the king*] With some variation in the figure the King is now represented as awaiting the Bride. In the former part of the psalm, as in the Song of Solomon, i. 4, the Bride is brought by the King into his chambers. This also suits the symbolical, better than the merely historical explanation, cf. Rev. xix. 7, 8. Thus in the following clause the virgins who attend upon the Queen are brought to the King; whereas in Eastern harems they are under the absolute control of their mistress; this deviation from national usage cannot be well accounted for excepting by reference to the inner meaning: pure, virginal, saintly spirits, who form the cortége of the heavenly Bride.

needlework] In embroidery of divers colours. The costliness of these robes and their exceeding beauty always gave them a place among the most precious treasures of Eastern princes. Cf. 2 S. xiii. 18. The gold may symbolize the perfect purity and natural dignity of the Bride, the many-coloured and beautiful raiment her possession of all Christian graces.

16. *of thy fathers*] The words are addressed to the King, not to the Bride: the fathers are those "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came," Rom. ix. 5.

The promise that the King's children shall be princes in all the earth had doubtless a partial fulfilment in Solomon's reign, nor is the anticipation of an universal dominion alien to the spirit of Hebrew poetry; cf. Ps. xviii. 43; but the mystical meaning is more in accordance with the whole strain of prophecy. See 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. i. 6, v. 10, xx. 6.

17. *I will make thy name to be remembered*] The final address of the Psalmist is to the King, not to the Bride, as the A.V. might imply. The work of all Christ's messengers, whether prophets or evangelists, is simply to make His name known.

for ever and ever] The last words leave no doubt as to the Messianic character of the psalm. The people, lit. the peoples, *i.e.* the Gentiles, accepting Christ as their King, praise Him "as God over all, blessed for evermore." Rom. ix. 5. Kay.

PSALM XLVI.

This psalm and the two following have the same general subject and character. They express the perfect confidence of true Israelites in the presence and protection of God at a season of imminent and terrible danger. Some allusions may seem to point to the invasion of the Assyrians under Sennacherib, which was preceded by great convulsions, and by the overthrow of many peoples closely connected with the kingdom of Judah, and which was terminated by their sudden and complete destruction. It is observed, moreover, that there is a singular resemblance between these psalms and portions of Isaiah: and they were probably applied by the people of Judah to that signal deliverance in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. Fürst attributes the psalm (as also xlviii., lxxv., lxxvi.) to Hezekiah; 'Gesch. der biblischen Literatur,' II. p. 383. It seems, however, on the whole more likely that they were composed when the kingdom of Judah was invaded by the combined forces of Moab, Ammon, and Edom in the reign of Jehoshaphat; see 2 Chro. xx. The feelings and whole current of thought in these psalms coincide remarkably with those expressed by Jehoshaphat himself, and by the prophet Jahaziel, "a Levite of the sons of Asaph," 2 Chro. xx. 14, before the catastrophe, and with the account of the rejoicings of the king and his people at

the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into †the midst of the sea;

† Heb. *the heart of the seas.*

3 *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

4 *There is* a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the most High.

5 God *is* in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, †*and that* right early.

† Heb. *when the morning appeareth.*

6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

7 The LORD of hosts *is* with us;

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the valley of Berachah, and on their triumphant return to Jerusalem, when they came "with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD." 2 Chro. xx. 28. See notes on *v.* 9, xlvii. 9, and xlviii. 4.

The expressions, however, are for the most part general, well adapted for any season of severe trial; and as such adopted by the Reformed Church of Germany in Luther's grand paraphrase "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott."

The psalm has three equal portions, each of four lines, marked distinctly at the close by the musical term Selah. The second and third portions have also the same refrain, which may possibly have been omitted by a transcriber at the end of the first portion, after *v.* 3; a conjecture of Hupfeld, approved by Delitzsch.

Alamoth] The Hebrew word means virgins: it is a musical term, and probably signifies that the psalm was to be recited by alto or soprano voices, principally by maidens. Cf. 1 Chro. xv. 20. Thus Miriam, accompanied by the women of Israel, sang the refrain to the Song of Moses; Ex. xv. 20, 21.

1. *a very present help*] Or, "found greatly a help in trouble." The text expresses the sense correctly, and very beautifully. Luther paraphrases it in his hymn, "Er hilft uns frey aus aller Noth."

2. *though the earth be removed*] Or, **changes**, as in Ps. xv. 4, *i.e.* undergoes a series of convulsions which change its condition and aspect. The reader will recall the words of Horace, "Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinæ," but the difference between the Hebrew and Latin is remarkable in two respects: the confidence of the Roman is grounded on his own justice and tenacity of purpose, that of the Hebrew on God's Presence; and the image of the broken world falling in ruins is far less true than that of the earth shaken and mountains overthrown by a terrible earthquake: the Hebrew has the advantages of humility and truth.

be carried] Or, **be hurled**; "carried" scarcely expresses the force of the Hebrew word, which is used only of violent motion.

into the midst of the sea] Lit., as in marg., **into the heart of the seas**. The plural "seas" is equivalent to the word ocean, or the vast deep out of which the mountains were raised in creation. Cf. Gen. i. 9, 10.

3. *roar*] Cf. Ps. xciii. 3, 4; so Jer. v. 22, xlvi. 7, xlvii. 2; Matt. vii. 25. These and similar passages leave no doubt as to the allegorical meaning: the convulsions of nature represent national revolutions.

4. *a river*] This figure is expressly chosen to represent the contrast between the serene and tranquil influence of God's Presence among His people, and the convulsions described in the preceding verses. There may be an allusion to the "waters of Shiloah that go softly," which Isaiah, viii. 6, uses as an emblem of the house of David; but in this passage the river is God's Presence, His own mighty Spirit, which flows, so to speak, around the city, at once protecting it (see Isai. xxxiii. 21) and supplying all its wants, see Rev. xxii. 2. Thus Hitzig, Hupfeld, and most critics.

tabernacles] Or, "dwellings," though in the plural the word refers, as in Ps. xliii. 3, to the sanctuary or tabernacle with its courts.

5. *God is in the midst of her*] Lev. xxvi. 12; Isai. xii. 6.

right early] Rather, **at the approach of morning**. This does not mean "right early," but at the time of deliverance which comes like dawn after the gloomy night. The same expression is used Ex. xiv. 27. Cf. Pss. xxx. 5, xlix. 14; Isai. xvii. 14. Thus Kimchi, Michaelis, Hengst., and Hupfeld.

6. This verse explains the figures used in *vv.* 2, 3. The reference is still clearer in the Hebrew, where the same words (which are rendered in the text "rage" and "roar" and "moved" and "removed") are used in both places.

melted] Or, **was dissolved**; an expression frequently used to denote the effect of God's judgments. Thus Ps. lxxv. 3; Exod. xv. 15; Isai. xiv. 31, "art dissolved;" lxiv. 7, where see marg.; Amos ix. 5; 2 Pet. iii. 11. Here it implies the discomfiture of all His enemies.

7. *The LORD...Jacob*] The confidence of the Psalmist rests on two principles, the uni-

† Heb. *an high place for us.*

the God of Jacob *is* †our refuge. Selah.

8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

PSALM XLVII.

The nations are exhorted cheerfully to entertain the kingdom of Christ.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah.

‖ Or, *of*

O CLAP your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

2 For the LORD most high *is* terrible; *he is* a great King over all the earth.

3 He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

4 He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

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versality of God's dominion, indicated by the title "the Lord of Hosts," and His covenanted relation to the Hebrews, as the God of Jacob. In the former clause several MSS. have "the God of Hosts," Elohim for Jehovah: a reading preferred by some critics.

is with us] Thus the prophet Jahaziel promises, "go out against them, for the LORD will be with you," 2 Chro. xx. 17. Heb. *Immanu*, reminding us of the great name Immanuel.

8. *Come, behold*] These words are suitable to either of the transactions referred to in the introduction; but of the two more specially to the ruin of the invaders in Jehoshaphat's reign, when, "by the power of Jehovah," the Ammonites and Moabites first destroyed their allies, the Edomites, and then slew each other: see 2 Chro. xx. 22, 23. In this psalm there is no notice of the annihilation of a vast army by a sudden visitation from heaven.

9. See Isai. ii. 4. The resemblance between this passage, and indeed the whole psalm, and the early chapters of Isaiah, is exceedingly striking. The images in the prophet are drawn out more fully, with great variety and richness of details; hence it may be inferred that in the psalm we have an earlier production.

10. *Be still*] Or, "cease," sc. from your anxieties and efforts. Cf. Exod. xiv. 13. In 1 S. xv. 16, the word "cease" is used thus absolutely.

I will be exalted] Cf. Isai. ii. 11, 17; Ps. xxi. 13, and see Exod. xiv. 4, 17, 18.

PSALM XLVII.

This appears to have been composed for a national thanksgiving after the deliverance celebrated in the preceding psalm. The victory had been won without a battle, and is therefore ascribed, with even more than usual propriety, to the personal intervention of God. Hence in *v.* 5 God is represented as returning after the victory to His heavenly abode, and seated in glory on His throne. The connection of the two psalms is admitted by critics; even Ewald recognizes the similarity of tone and subject, though, without assigning any special reason, he places this among the later psalms.

The fifth verse comes between two strophes, each of four verses; the division is marked by Selah.

1. *O clap your hands*] The immediate result of God's judgments was described in the preceding psalm. That was terror and awe. Then the strain changes; the ultimate effects are realized, and in the establishment of peace and justice all nations are called upon to recognize His goodness. The order of the two clauses should be reversed, "All ye peoples, clap your hands."

2. *terrible*] Or, "awful;" the fear is not incompatible with reverent joy: cf. Ps. lxv. 5, lxviii. 35, lxxvi. 7—9; Deut. vii. 21.

3. *He shall subdue*] Or, **He subdueth;** the Psalmist realizes the future, for he regards the government of the world as the sure heritage of Israel. The same word is used in Ps. xviii. 47, where see note.

4. *He shall choose*] **He chooseth:** hence the futility of all efforts to dispossess His people. There is obviously a reference to the special object of the invasion, which resulted in so complete a discomfiture. Jehoshaphat's words are "to come to cast us out of Thy possession, which Thou hast given us to inherit." 2 Chro. xx. 11.

the excellency] *i.e.* that inheritance in which Jacob exults with grateful joy: cf. Amos vi. 8, viii. 7; Isai. xxxv. 2, lx. 15; Nah. ii. 2.

5 God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

7 For God *is* the King of all the earth: sing ye praises [1]with understanding.

8 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

9 [5]The princes of the people are gathered together, *even* the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth *belong* unto God: he is greatly exalted.

[1] Or, every one that hath understanding.
[5] Or, The voluntary of the people are gathered unto *the* people of *the* God of Abraham.

PSALM XLVIII.

The ornaments and privileges of the church.

A Song *and* Psalm [1]for the sons of Korah.

[1] Or, of.

GREAT *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, *in* the mountain of his holiness.

2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion, *on* the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

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5. *God is gone up*] God is said to come down when He interposes for the deliverance of His people, or the overthrow of their enemies; and "to go up," returning to His heavenly throne, when that work is accomplished. All these expressions have their special and literal fulfilment in the SON. Compare Ps. lxviii. 18, and Eph. iv. 8—10.

with a shout] Amidst the jubilant shouts of His rescued people.

trumpet] See 2 Chro. xx. 28, "They came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and *trumpets* unto the house of the LORD." There may also be a reference to the solemn procession when the ark was brought to Mount Zion, 2 S. vi. 15. The same words are there used, "David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark with *shouting* and with the sound of the *trumpet*."

7. *King of all the earth*] In Zech. xiv. 9, the same expression is used with reference to the manifestation of the Lord on the day of judgment.

sing ye praises with understanding] The Hebrew expression is specific, indeed, so to speak, technical; it means "play on the harp a hymn of instruction," marking the special intention of the psalm, which is to inculcate practical and spiritual lessons. Cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

8. *reigneth*] Or, **is King**, *i.e.* hath manifested His kingly power. Cf. Ps. xxii. 28, and 1 Chro. xvi. 31.

9. *The princes*] This translation is quite correct. The word properly means "noble," "generous" in character; but it is used of princes, not, however, without reference to the qualities which become them, and which they may have manifested on the occasions which are celebrated in these psalms. Cf. Judg. v. 9.

even the people] The statement appears to be, Princes of peoples (sc. foreign or heathen nations) are assembled, as a people of the God of Abraham. In other words, all princes of high and generous character, all noble spirits, will be converted, and form one nation, acknowledging the God of Abraham, becoming thus "a chosen generation," "a royal priesthood." See Exod. xix. 6; and 1 Pet. ii. 9.

the shields] *i.e.* the defenders, or rulers. The same metaphor is used by Hosea, iv. 18; see marg.

This psalm is a striking instance of the combination of the lyrical and prophetical elements: while celebrating a transaction of immediate interest to God's people, the Psalmist uses expressions throughout which have their adequate fulfilment in the Person and work of the Messiah.

PSALM XLVIII.

This psalm belongs to the same series, and refers to the same circumstances as the two preceding. It completes the train of grateful thoughts suggested by the deliverance. In the first the overthrow of the enemy is the prominent thought, and in the second the triumph of God's glory; in this the Psalmist turns his thoughts to the beauty, security, and splendour of the city of God.

The structure resembles that of the preceding psalm; the eighth verse, with Selah, is between two strophes, each of three verses.

The Levites sang this psalm at the morning sacrifice on the second day of the week. See Mishna, 'Thamid.'

1. *greatly to be praised*] Or, **greatly praised**. The Psalmist speaks of praise not only due to God, but offered to Him by a grateful people.

mountain of his holiness] **His holy mountain**; cf. Ps. ii. 6, lxxxvii. 1; Isai. ii. 3.

2. *for situation*] Literally, "for elevation," or "in height." The word seems to denote a graceful wavelike height: not rugged and precipitous, but rising by a succession of beautiful terraces. See Note below.

the joy of the whole earth] Thus Jeremiah, "Is this the city that men call the perfec-

3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

4 For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

5 They saw *it*, *and* so they marvelled; they were troubled, *and* hasted away.

6 Fear took hold upon them there, *and* pain, as of a woman in travail.

7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

9 We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

10 According to thy name, O God, so *is* thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.

12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

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tion of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?" Lam. ii. 15.

on the sides of the north] i.e. to the north of Zion is situate the city of which God is in a special sense the King, as dwelling there in the Temple, His Palace: cf. Matt. v. 35. This appears to be the meaning of a somewhat obscure passage. The beauty and glory of Zion, the residence of Judah's earthly sovereigns, is great, but surpassed by the city built around the Palace of its heavenly King. For the phrase cf. Isai. xiv. 13; Ezek. xxxviii. 6, 15, where A.V. has "north quarters." See Note below.

3. *God is known*] *i.e.* He hath manifested Himself as the Protector of Zion, dwelling in her palaces. Compare Ps. xlvi. 5.

4. *the kings were assembled*] This clearly refers to an invasion of Judah by confederated kings, who were discomfited without a battle; and it strongly confirms the view stated in the introduction to Ps. xlvi.

they passed by] It is not clear whether this refers to an advance of the confederates towards Jerusalem, or to their sudden overthrow; the former interpretation seems to agree better with the context. The princes advanced, they saw the glorious city, they marvelled, were troubled, and fled in terror and confusion. From 2 Chro. xx. 20, we find that the invaders were encamped at Tekoa, whence, though at a considerable distance, they had a view of Jerusalem: Delitzsch.

7. *the ships of Tarshish*] See note on 1 K. x. 22. The mention of ships in connection with an invasion of Palestine is difficult to account for; but the Psalmist may possibly allude to the destruction of the combined fleet of Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah at Ezion-Geber. See 1 K. xxii. 48, and 2 Chro. xx. 35—37. In that case we have an instance either of a well-timed warning, such as was given to Jehoshaphat by Eliezer, or of a seasonable reminiscence in the midst of a national exultation. Fürst ('Geschichte der biblischen Literatur,' p. 385) supposes this to refer to a defeat of a piratical fleet of Greek or Cyprian ships by Sennacherib, B.C. 705; but it is exceedingly improbable that the writer of this psalm should thus commemorate a victory of the invaders of Judea. Köster assumes that the Psalmist alludes to a destruction of an auxiliary fleet of Phœnicians not recorded in history.

The passage "Thou breakest," &c., is generally taken as a comparison, "Thou breakest them as Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish;" but the statement of a fact seems more appropriate and forcible, and involves no strain upon the grammatical construction.

8. *God will establish it for ever*] A prophecy of which the literal fulfilment is looked for by those who believe in a future restoration of Israel, according to the flesh, but which is truly and adequately accomplished in the perpetuity of the Church, of which Jerusalem was a type. See Isai. ii. 2, 3; Mic. iv. 1, 2; Rev. xxi. 9, 10.

9. *We have thought*, &c.] Lit. "We have imaged," *i.e.* bodied it forth, or, as we should say, vividly realized. Compare the prayer of Jehoshaphat, "in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD," immediately before the overthrow of the invaders, and the account given of the solemn praises then offered by the Levites of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korahites, 2 Chro. xx. 5—19.

10. *According to thy name*] *i.e.* wherever God's Name is known, and its significance manifested by such deeds of might and goodness, His praise will be declared.

11. *the daughters of Judah*] Either, according to some of the later commentators (Hupfeld, Delitzsch), the cities of Judah, or literally, the maidens and women of Judah, who always took a prominent part in national acts of thanksgiving. See Ex. xv. 20; Ps. lxviii. 25.

12. *Walk*, &c.] This address to the Israelites, not to the enemies as some would take it, agrees

† Heb. *Set your heart to her bulwarks.*
‖ Or, *raise up.*

13 †Mark ye well her bulwarks, ‖consider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following.

14 For this God *is* our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide *even* unto death.

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remarkably with the account of the triumphant entry of Jehoshaphat into Jerusalem, 2 Chro. xx. 27, 28. The people are invited to observe the strength of the city, its bulwarks and towers, and the grandeur of its buildings, and thus to realize the extent and completeness of their deliverance.

13. *Mark ye well*] Literally, "Set your heart upon her well," observe closely the strength of the fortifications. Cf. Job vii. 17.

consider] The Hebrew word occurs in no other passage. It probably means, not "raise up," as in the margin of our Bibles, but "observe one by one," literally "distribute." Each noble building will suggest fresh motives for grateful joy. Compare Isai. xxxiii. 18.

14. *unto death*] The last two words are generally admitted to rest on insufficient authority; the psalm ends probably with the words "He will be our guide." Delitzsch, Hitzig, and other critics, take Al-muth to be a musical term, denoting the tune; in that case it would either be an exception to the general rule, coming at the end of the psalm, as in Hab. iii. 19, instead of the beginning, as elsewhere throughout this book; or it may be misplaced, belonging probably to the next psalm.

NOTE on PSALM XLVIII. 2.

ירכתי צפון means, according to Hebrew usage, the extremity of the north, the portion situated on the north. Many modern critics (Gesenius, Hitzig, Fürst, 'G. b. L.' II. p. 385) see in this a designation of the supposed residence of deities in the north, as though the Psalmist compared, or rather identified, Zion with the "mount of the congregation, on the sides of the north" (Isai. xiv. 13), where the king of Babylon, in accordance with Asiatic mythology, hopes to ascend. But there is no indication here of any comparison, and the construction, as Hupfeld shews, presents insuperable difficulties, nor is there any probable ground for the assumption that an Israelite could think of identifying Zion with a heathen Olympus. Delitzsch gives the interpretation which is adopted in the footnote. Perowne observes that we have evidently a topographical designation, and adds: "If Zion be the peak now levelled on the north of the Temple mount," as Fergusson ('Essay,' p. 55 ff.) and Thrupp ('Ancient Jerusalem,' p. 17 ff.) suppose, "'the Mount Zion (on) the sides of the north' may be the true rendering here. And this too might peculiarly be called 'beautiful for elevation,' as it was the highest point of the whole plateau."

PSALM XLIX.

1 *An earnest persuasion to build the faith of resurrection, not on worldly power, but on God.* 16 *Worldly prosperity is not to be admired.*

‖ Or, *of.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah.

HEAR this, all *ye* people; give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world:

2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.

PSALM XLIX.

This psalm contains the most perfect development of Hebrew thought on the deepest problem of existence. It affirms clearly the doctrine of a future state of compensation, and establishes it on the strongest grounds. It is altogether didactic, resembling in style and rhythm the book of Proverbs, in brief, compact, and highly poetic sentences, adapted for solemn recitation with lyric accompaniment: it brings together a series of striking thoughts on the present and future condition of men "who trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches." Through life they prosper, leave a rich inheritance to their children, look forward to the permanence and grandeur of their posterity, who laud their names and approve their sayings: but with the end of life comes the end of all: they are the prey of death, wise and fools alike: their noble forms rot in the grave, and they have no futurity of life (19). The righteous, on the contrary, is redeemed from death (15), taken unto Himself by God: and in the morning he will have dominion over them. The contrast is complete: in this life the wicked has everything, even the hope of permanent prosperity for his family, but for him there is no hope after death: the righteous in this life may have absolutely none but evil days, may be beset by treacherous foes (5), but he is sure of redemption, of acceptance with God, of a morning ushering in the dominion of light.

The date of the psalm is uncertain, but,

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

[a] Ps. 78. 2. Matth. 13. 35.

4 [a]I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, *when* the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

8 (For the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

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judging from style, colouring, and tone of thought, it belongs to the latter portion of the grand gnomic age of Hebrew poetry, beginning with David, attaining its development under Solomon, and lasting, with intervals of obscurity and brightness, to the great development of prophecy under Hezekiah. It resembles those psalms which are attributed to Asaph, or bear the names of the sons of Korah, but are unconnected with historical events. There is a strong resemblance between it and the book of Job, which the Psalmist must have studied deeply; but the problem there proposed is here solved, and the yearnings there expressed are satisfied by the declaration (*v.* 15) that God will redeem the soul of the righteous from the power of the grave, and receive him unto Himself. See Introd. § 17.

The structure is clearly marked, 1—4, introductory strophe; the refrain (at *vv.* 12 and 20) closes two strophes each of eight verses, but somewhat irregular in arrangement.

1. *all ye people*] Or, **peoples**: the psalm is addressed to all nations, it deals with universal truths: a term specially characteristic of the Solomonian period, or what is sometimes called the school of Hebrew wisdom (chochma).

world] The Hebrew denotes transitoriness; the world of time and sense: cf. Ps. xvii. 14.

2. *low and high*] Literally, "sons of *Adam*, and sons of *ish*." *Adam* corresponds to homo, ἄνθρωπος, and *ish* to vir, ἀνήρ. Our language has no corresponding terms, and the A.V. expresses the real meaning.

3. "My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding." The heart is not represented as producing, but as reflecting upon, the truth suggested to it for meditation; hence in the following verse the Psalmist speaks of himself as listening to the parable.

4. *parable*] Or, "proverb;" the Hebrew word "mashal" comprehends all instructions, sayings, proverbs, allegories, or parables.

open my dark saying] By "dark saying" the Psalmist means figurative words conveying a hidden, mysterious meaning (in Ezek. xvii. 2 the A.V. has "riddle," thus Aq. αἴνιγμα). He opens them, as a merchant opens a casket of jewels, not exactly explaining them, but bringing them into notice: they are truths which, though dark, unknown to the sensual man, need only to be stated to command attention, and convey instruction.

upon the harp] Or, **with the harp**, *i.e.* with a musical accompaniment. This marks the character of the poem, lyrical or didactic: not like the preceding hymns, to be sung by choirs of Levites, but solemnly recited by one teacher.

5. *Wherefore should I fear*] This is the subject-matter of the dark saying, or enigma: the same which is proposed, and but partially solved, in Job.

in the days of evil] This marks a time of personal, perhaps of national calamity.

when the iniquity of my heels] This translation is literal, and may be retained, but the meaning is disputed. If "my heels" were equivalent to "my steps," *i.e.* "of my false steps," errors or sins, the Psalmist would attribute his misfortunes to his own misconduct; but, common as such a view is in the psalms, and true in itself, it seems out of place here: hence most commentators take the word "heels" to be equivalent to "supplanters," treacherous enemies ever on the watch to trip up a man's heels: and this appears to be at once the most natural and defensible construction; compare the name Jacob. Thus Ewald, and Hitzig, who quotes Josh. viii. 13. Hupfeld objects that the word rendered "heels" cannot be a personal or appellative noun, but Del. meets this by, instancing similar forms.

7. *None of them*] The point is in the word "brother." No man can redeem one who is but another self, sharer of the same nature. "Redeem" is equivalent to save from the great enemy "death:" but it may mean either from dying, or from the punishment which follows death. In this psalm the meaning is determined by *v.* 15, which cannot possibly have the former meaning. Once dead the rich man belongs altogether to death, and will remain its captive and prey for ever. Dr Kay observes truly that a man might redeem his brother from temporal servitude. Lev. xxv. 48, "after he is sold, he may be redeemed again; *one of his brethren may redeem him.*"

give to God a ransom for him] Death is but the gaoler or the prison; the ransom must

9 That he should still live for ever, *and* not see corruption.

10 For he seeth *that* wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their inward thought *is*, *that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling places † to all generations; they call *their* lands after their own names.

† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

12 Nevertheless man *being* in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts *that* perish.

13 This their way *is* their folly: yet their posterity † approve their sayings. Selah.

14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their ‖ beauty shall consume ‖ in the grave from their dwelling.

† Heb. [illegible]

‖ Or, strength.

‖ Or, the [illegible]

15 But God will redeem my soul

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be one which God accepts, and God is the only Redeemer. Ransom is thus used Job xxxvi. 18, 19, and xxxiii. 24. It is a word which occurs once only in the psalms: in Num. xxxv. 31, the A.V. has "satisfaction."

8. *the redemption...precious*] So costly that it cannot be achieved, see Job xxxvi. 18, 19; when the fatal blow is once inflicted "*then a great ransom cannot deliver the.*"

and it ceaseth] Or, "and he gives it up," *i.e.* abandons the attempt; then each man once lost will remain unredeemed for ever: no mediation will avail, or be thought of, hereafter.

9. The connection of this verse with the preceding is rather obscure. It may be expressed by a paraphrase; the rich man must abandon all hope that any ransom can be found which will deliver him for ever from the grave. As for hope after death, it does not enter at all into his calculation.

not see corruption] Cf. Ps. xvi. 10. Moses Haddarshon (about 1000 A.D.) has an observation on this verse of importance in its bearing upon Jewish controversy: "Our Rabbins teach that this verse speaks of King Messiah, who will die, redeem the Patriarchs, and then live for ever without seeing corruption." Sepp, 'Leben Jesu,' Vol. VI. p. 517.

10. This verse is a continuation from *v.* 7. The observation of universal mortality leaves no place for hope—the wise die, the fool perishes, their wealth goes to others: but this argument would be utterly pointless had not the just man a different and unfailing hope after death.

11. *Their inward thought is*] This expresses the sense of the Hebrew, which is singularly forcible; it means that their whole inner man (see *v.* 9) is filled with one thought: they know they must die, but then their houses will stand for many generations, their lands will bear their name, and preserve their memory; cf. Ps. x. 6, and Gen. iv. 17. The Psalmist does not deny this, nor dwell on the frequent disappointment of the hope; he reverts to the one certain and universal fact, stated in the next verse. See Note below.

12. *abideth not*] Literally, "passeth not the night," which is generally taken to mean does not remain for any considerable time in a state of honour; but the more forcible and obvious sense is, that he will by no means repose in honour: the sleep of death will be mere corruption; see *v.* 14 and *v.* 20.

13. The most probable meaning of this rather obscure verse is, "this is the way of men who are self-confident, and of those after them who approve their sayings;" the rendering in the text is however defensible, and gives a good and true sense. The Selah marks the climax, viz. that they should feel such utterly foolish confidence and transmit their notions to their posterity.

14. *Like sheep*] As sheep lie down in the fold at night, so man lies down in the grave: then death is his shepherd; but in the morning, which follows the night of death, comes an awakening, and then the righteous will reign over the wicked.

death shall feed on them] Rather, "death will tend them," be their shepherd. LXX. ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς.

have dominion] This is the true meaning of the word. It occurs frequently, and with scarcely an exception in the same sense. Whether the Psalmist realized the truth of an everlasting dominion assured to God's saints after the general resurrection may be questioned, but no other interpretation meets the plain and literal statement in this verse. Cf. Ps. xvii. 15; Dan. vii. 22, xii. 2; 1 Cor. vi. 2.

and their beauty] Literally, "and their form is for the destruction of Hell," or Sheol: *i.e.* their form with its beauty and grandeur will fall into utter dissolution in Sheol, the state of which the grave is the entrance.

from their dwelling] *i.e.* so that no one of them will have any dwelling: a bitter irony of their hope that their houses will endure for ever.

The objections to this construction urged by Hitzig are forcible; with a change of punctuation he renders the clause thus, "and their form withers, Sheol is their dwelling-place."

† Heb. *from the hand of* ‖ *the grave.* ‖ Or, *hell.*

†from the power of ‖the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

17 *b*For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

b Job 27. 19.

18 Though †while he lived he blessed his soul: and *men* will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.

† Heb. *in his life.*

19 †He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

† Heb. The soul *shall go.*

20 Man *that is* in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts *that* perish.

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15. In grand contrast to all this stands the hope of the righteous. God will redeem him from the hand of Sheol, death has put forth his hand and seized him, but is forced to surrender his captive, for God takes him to Himself (cf. Gen. v. 24). This is the plain meaning. To suppose that the Psalmist speaks of deliverance before death is absurd: such a hope would put him on a level with the merest fool, who knows at least that redemption from the universal doom is impossible. It is satisfactory to find those critics who are least inclined to admit anticipations of the Gospel in the Old Testament agreed in this interpretation. None defends it more forcibly than Hupfeld. He says truly that it is not stated as a revealed doctrine, but as a presentiment, a deep inward conviction inseparable from real living faith in a living God. See also Introd. to Job, § 7; and Cremer, 'Wörterbuch der Neutest. Gräcität,' p. 67.

16. *Be not thou afraid*] This conclusion repeats and confirms the general lessons of the psalm: these words answer the question of *v.* 5; all ground for misgiving is removed when the future state of the man of the world is considered.

when one] Or, **when a man**, *i.e.* a great man: see note on *v.* 2. *Ish* is here used.

18. *while he lived*] Literally, **in his life**, that life which to him was all in all, to which his hopes and joys were confined.

he blessed his soul] *i.e.* congratulated himself on his prosperity, and indulged all his appetites: see Ps. x. 3, and compare the address of the rich man to his soul, Luke xii. 19.

and men will praise thee] A fine point in the sarcasm: the rich man's self-congratulations are echoed by his neighbours; they admire his luxury, his self-indulgence, and repeat his axioms. It is remarkable how the Psalmist exhausts the subject; of all trials to the faith of thoughtful observers none is greater than to see the "honour, reverence, and troops of friends" which surround the rich man, as such, to the very end.

when thou doest well to thyself] *i. e.* livest in good cheer, as Eccl. xi. 9, where A.V. has "let thy heart cheer thee."

19. *He shall go*] Or, **She**, *i.e.* the soul (which he thought so happy) shall go to the place where his fathers await him.

they] *i. e.* he and his fathers, all who live like him, and die like him.

never] Or, **they shall not see light for evermore.** There is the one point of difference hereafter; the blackness of Sheol will be their portion eternally; but the just will see light in God's light. See Ps. xxxvi. 9.

20. *Man...understandeth not*] In *v.* 10, the Psalmist quotes the common saying that wise or foolish all alike die; here he states that they only who live in honour without reflecting (who do not "so number their days as to apply their hearts unto wisdom") resemble the beasts that perish; dying without hope of an hereafter.

NOTE on PSALM XLIX. 11.

For קרבם the Chaldee, LXX., and Syr. read קברם, their grave, a reading easily substituted, and giving by itself a fair sense—their graves are their homes for ever; but the text is preferable, and suits the following clause. The construction of this latter clause presents some difficulty, and it has been rendered "men call upon their names upon the earth:" but the A.V., which follows the old Vv. and is supported by most critics, is to be retained.

PSALM L.

1 *The majesty of God in the church.* 5 *His order to gather saints.* 7 *The pleasure of God is not in ceremonies,* 14 *but in sincerity of obedience.*

A Psalm ‖of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

THE mighty God, *even* the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

6 And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God *is* judge himself. Selah.

7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I *am* God, *even* thy God.

8 I will not reprove thee for thy

PSALM L.

This is the first of the psalms attributed to Asaph, and the only one in this book: the chief group of Asaphic psalms is in the third book, from 73 to 83. Asaph was the leader and superintendent of the Levitic choirs appointed by David, 1 Chro. xvi. 4, 5. Thus too Hezekiah "commanded the Levites to sing praise to the LORD in the words of David and of Asaph the Seer," 2 Chro. xxix. 30. He and his sons presided over four out of the twenty-four groups, consisting each of twelve Levites, who conducted in turn the musical services of the temple. He lived some years after the accession of Solomon, and his descendants are often mentioned in later reigns. Some psalms which bear his name may possibly have been composed by his descendants, but this grand ode bears all the marks of the golden age of Hebrew poetry. The characteristics of the Asaphic psalms are exceeding solemnity, a lofty judicial tone, with awful warnings and admonitions. God is represented as personally addressing the people (cf. Ps. lxxxi., lxxxii.). The name Jehovah is occasionally used, but, as in the Korahitish psalms, Elohim occurs far more frequently: this writer also combines various names of the Deity, as in *v.* 1.

The central thought of this psalm is the inefficacy of outward sacrifices compared with the offerings of the heart and purity of life. The same principle is distinctly recognized in the Davidic psalms (see xl. 6, 8, lxix. 30, 31, li. 16, 17) and by all the prophets, but is nowhere set forth more explicitly and solemnly than in this psalm; the circumstance that it is the composition of a chief among the Levites, whose whole life was devoted to the temple-service, is specially important, shewing how unfounded is the notion of a spirit of opposition or rivalry between the prophetic and priestly orders in the best days of Israel.

The introduction is unusually long, six verses, ending with Selah; then one ejaculatory verse (7) followed by two strophes (8—15, 16—23).

1. *The mighty God*] Three names of the Deity are given, El, Elohim, Jehovah, partly, as may be supposed, to mark the solemnity of the occasion, partly to indicate the universality of the judgment; God in His might: God in the manifold attributes, or manifestation, of His Being: God as revealed specially to His people by the covenant name, Jehovah.

2. *the perfection of beauty*] Our translators evidently took this as an epithet of Mount Zion, and probably correctly; for though "beauty" is often attributed to the Messiah (see Ps. xlv. 2), it applies rather to the human manifestation than to the divine essence of the Deity. Its application to Mount Zion is justified by many passages, *e. g.* Lam. ii. 15, and Ps. xlviii 2, where see note.

hath shined] The Hebrew word is specially used of Theophanies, *i. e.* visible manifestations of God's Presence, not of His Person. See Ps. lxxx. 1; Deut. xxxiii. 2.

3. *not keep silence*] Loud thunderings, the voice of God, accompany the Theophany, as in Pss. xviii. 13, xcvii. 2—5; Exod. xix. 16, &c.

a fire] Ps. xxi. 9; cf. Lev. x. 2.

4. *He shall call*] Compare Deut. iv. 26, xxxii. 1; Isai. i. 2; Mic. vi. 2.

5. *my saints*] Literally, "My pious ones." In other passages the word (Heb. *hasidim*) denotes actual, personal piety; here it seems rather to be a general designation of Israelites, as a holy people in virtue of their covenanted relation to God, which is attested by sacrifices. It was the name assumed in the Maccabean period by the strict party afterwards called Pharisees: see Jost, 'Gesch. Judenthums,' Vol. I. 125.

that have made, &c.] Or, **who ratify my covenant with sacrifice**: see Exod. xxiv. 5—8.

6. *And the heavens shall declare*] Or, **the heavens proclaim His righteousness**; *i. e.* they announce His coming to judge the world, and vindicate the course of righteousness.

for God is judge himself] Or, **that God He judgeth**, *i. e.* is now about to declare judgment; cf. Ps. lxxv. 7, lxxvi. 8, 9, both psalms of Asaph.

7. Cf. Isai. i. 2; Ps. lxxxi. 8.

sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, *to have been* continually before me.

9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, *nor* he goats out of thy folds.

10 For every beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field *are* †mine.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: [a]for the world *is* mine, and the fulness thereof.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or *that* thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

17 [b]Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and †hast been partaker with adulterers.

19 †Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

20 Thou sittest *and* speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.

21 These *things* hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether *such an one* as thyself: *but* I will reprove thee, and set *them* in order before thine eyes.

22 Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear *you* in pieces, and *there be* none to deliver.

eb. 'h me.

xod. 5. ut. 10.

b 41. 11. 24. 1. Cor. 10. 28.

[b] Rom. 2. 21, 22.

† Heb. *thy portion was with adulterers.*

† Heb. *Thou sendest.*

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8. *continually*] The Hebrew word is specially used of the daily sacrifices offered in the sanctuary. In this respect no fault is imputed to the people. The whole psalm assumes the regular observance of the ceremonial law. Cf. 1 S. xv. 22; Jer. vii. 22.

12. *the world*, &c.] See 1 Cor. x. 26, 28; Ps. xxiv. 1.

14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving*] Literally, "sacrifice thanksgiving:" *i.e.* instead of the legal "sacrifice of peace offerings for a thanksgiving or a vow" (see Lev. vii. 11—16) the true worshipper must offer that which the victim represents, viz. praise from a grateful heart, and all duties to which he is bound by the terms of his covenant with God. This does not imply that the outer forms are to be omitted, but that they are valueless, except as the expression of genuine devotion and obedience to God's will. The reader must always bear in mind the Hebrew idiom, which, if taken literally, would seem to condemn that which it simply represents as of subordinate and conditional importance. It must not be supposed that this view implies a more advanced stage of religious consciousness than is found in the Pentateuch; for in that book all the obligations of the law are summed up in circumcision of the heart, and duty to God and man resting on the one great central principle of love. See Deut. xxx. 6, 16, and compare Prov. xxi. 3; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6—8; Isai. i. 11—15, &c.

15 *thou shalt glorify me*] Rashi, quoted by Dr Kay, "for this is My glory, that I save them that trust in Me."

16. *the wicked*] A different class of persons is now addressed, wilful transgressors, who still claim the privileges of God's people. Traces of the persuasion that no guilt completely abrogated the rights of Israelites are found in all ages of the national history.

17. *thou hatest*] The first characteristic of utter wickedness is inward alienation, followed by open rejection of the moral law.

18. *thou consentedst*] Or, "hadst pleasure;" this denotes a higher degree in guilt than even the commission of sin. Thus St Paul, "who not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Rom. i. 32.

hast been partaker] Rather, **and with adulterers is thy portion.** Thou sharest their condition, their feelings and their fate.

19. *Thou givest*] Literally, "sendest," *i. e.* lettest it loose, givest it free play. Cf. Job xxx. 11; Jas. ch. iii.

20. *thou slanderest*] "Thou utterest slander against." The Hebrew word, which occurs only in this passage, means "thrust" in Arabic, and corresponds to the Greek "scandal," that which causes a man to fall, overthrows his projects or character.

21. *and I kept silence*] Because God kept silence, did not at once openly punish the sin, the transgressor held Him to be wholly indifferent or even disposed to favour the sinner. Cf. Job xxi. 14, 15; Eccles. viii. 11.

thou thoughtest] Or, "didst imagine." Cf. Ps. xlviii. 9, where the same word is used.

22. *lest I tear*, &c.] Cf. Ps. vii. 2.

23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him †that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I shew the salvation of God.

† Heb. *that disposeth* his *way.*

PSALM LI.

1 *David prayeth for remission of sins, whereof he maketh a deep confession.* 6 *He prayeth for sanctification.* 16 *God delighteth not in sacrifice, but in sincerity.* 18 *He prayeth for the church.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, [a] when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

[a] 2 Sam. 11. 2. & 12. 1.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I

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23. *that ordereth his conversation aright*] Lit. as marg., "that disposeth his way," *i. e.* ordereth his way of life by the rule of duty. Cf. Gal. vi. 16. Symm. τῷ εὐτάκτως ὁδεύοντι.

will I shew] Or, "I will make him look with joy;" a common idiom in the Davidic psalms; see note on Ps. xxii. 17.

PSALM LI.

This begins a series of fifteen psalms, which are attributed in the inscriptions to David, most of them with unusually full notice of the circumstances under which they were composed. They are remarkable for the prevalent, though not exclusive, use of the divine name Elohim instead of Jehovah. In this psalm the fact may possibly be accounted for by David's feeling that his great sin had endangered, if not suspended for a season, the privileges assured to God's people by the covenant name: he might not plead that before his entire restoration to God's favour. The psalm is said in the inscription to have been written just at the time when Nathan came to rebuke him for the terrible guilt which he had contracted. This is confirmed by the strongest internal evidence: of no other person known from Holy Scripture can it be affirmed, that he was a devout man before and after a grievous fall, that his fall involved blood-guiltiness, that the crime was unpunished by law, and that he was restored to God's favour. The depth of penitence, and the fervour of devotion, are specially characteristic of David. The psalm consists of four parts; first, 1—4, ardent prayer for mercy and forgiveness founded upon unreserved confession of guilt, and acknowledgment of God's justice; secondly, 5—12, entreaty for restoration to favour and renewal of spirit; thirdly, 13—16, vows of spiritual sacrifice as the only one truly acceptable to God; and it winds up with a prayer for Zion, and the building of the walls of Jerusalem. The last part is supposed by many critics, some of unquestionable soundness, to have been added after the exile; but see note on *v.* 18.

This psalm has been adopted by the Church in all ages as that which expresses best and most fully the true spirit of penitence. Our Church uses it on Ash Wednesday, and inserts portions of it in her most solemn services.

Nathan] See 2 S. xii.

1. *Have mercy*] The prayer for forgiveness reposes wholly upon the grace of God. David does not yet venture to use the name of Jehovah; that will come when the prayer has been answered. In this psalm the cloud hangs over the sanctuary, though the divine light shines through it, and inspires hope.

mercy, lovingkindness] The first word is strong; it implies kindness, graciousness; but the second is much stronger; it speaks of deep, tender, parental sympathy, of an abundance and overflow of those feelings which assure the penitent child of his mother's unalterable love, of her yearnings for his return to her bosom. So great a sin could not be blotted out but by a great outpouring of grace.

blot out] The word implies total erasure, as of a writing from a tablet. Cf. Ex. xxxii. 32; Isai. xliii. 25, xliv. 22. David first prays for justification in its primary sense of deliverance from the imputation of guilt. See Ps. xxxviii.

transgressions] Not "transgression." David's great sin did not stand alone; adultery was followed by treachery and murder. He uses three distinct words for his guilt—transgressions, iniquity, and sin, involving every kind and degree of guilt: see note on Ps. xxxii. 1.

2. *Wash me throughly*] This is more than justification. The washing takes out the impurity, the soul is cleansed by it. Our version expresses the sense of the original, which, however, is even more forcible, implying reiterated washing.

cleanse] The word used in Lev. xiii. 6—24.

3. *For*] On his own side David has nothing to plead, no excuse, no palliation, only unreserved confession: but that one word "for" involves a sure hope. God will not reject a prayer offered in such a spirit. See Ps. xxxii. 5; Prov. xxviii. 13; 1 John i. 9.

sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: [b] that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

[b] Rom. 3. 4.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother † conceive me.

† Heb. *warm me.*

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 [c] Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

[c] Lev. 14. 6. Numb. 19. 18.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew [1] a right spirit within me.

[1] Or, *a constant spirit.*

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy

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sin] David uses here, and in all the psalms which refer to his great guilt, three words, which comprise all the characteristics of sin committed by an offender against God's law, save one, that of wilful impenitent wickedness. Our A.V. is generally careful in observing the distinction: "iniquity" (*avon*), or "perversity;" "transgression" (*pesha*), the breach of God's law; "sin" (*hattath*), as a defilement. He does not use the word wickedness (*resha*), nor is it in any case imputed to a servant of God. Cf. Pss. xxxii. 1, 2, xxxviii. 18, xxxix. 8—11, xl. 12.

4. *Against thee, thee only*] The word "only" is striking, considering how David had cruelly injured his fellow-men, and the terrible results of his guilt: but sin, as such, is directed primarily against God. His law is broken, His name dishonoured, and the special heinousness even of such offences as that of David consists in their antagonism to God's will. At the same time the Hebrew idiom must be remembered, which represents secondary and subordinate objects as absolutely nothing compared with the first and highest. Whatever guilt David might have contracted towards man, in the mind of a true Israelite it was absolutely nothing compared with his sin against God.

that thou mightest, &c.] *i.e.* David confesses his guilt unreservedly, in order that he may admit the justice of whatever sentence God may pronounce. "Justified" is taken in the true forensic sense of being just in fact and appearance, of being, and of being acknowledged to be, righteous. This recognition of God's righteousness is the first and most certain proof that a man is in a true position, and is capable of justification. Justify God by admitting that man has no hope whatever but in His free forgiveness, that nothing is due to man but punishment, and He will justify man by taking away the imputation of sin. Needless difficulty is raised by connecting the words "that thou mightest," &c., with the commission of guilt, instead of the confession.

5. From the special confession of sin David passes to the acknowledgment of inherent and inherited sinfulness. He does not plead this as an excuse or palliation, but as the ground and origin of his actual sin.

shapen] Or, "brought forth:" he came into the world with the taint of iniquity; nay more, the very origin of his existence was corrupt; his mother was a sinner when she conceived him. David does not regard the act of conception as sinful in itself, but accidentally, as the act of a sinful nature.

6. *inward parts*] The Hebrew word occurs only here and Job xxxviii. 36; according to the Rabbis, followed by Gesenius, it means the kidneys, as the seat of deep inward affections; but the A.V. is probably correct, in the inward parts, in the innermost consciousness.

7. *with hyssop*] *i.e.* as with hyssop, which was used in Levitical purifications, as after touching a corpse (Num. xix. 18), and more especially for leprosy. See Lev. xiv. 4—6. David regarded his sinfulness as a moral leprosy, for which the cure was symbolized by the blood sprinkled with the hyssop.

whiter than snow] See Isai. i. 18. This psalm is full of passages bearing the closest resemblance to Isaiah, especially to the later chapters; nor can there be any doubt that the prophet's mind was impregnated with the truths which nowhere find a fuller and more touching expression than in this psalm.

10. The creation of a pure heart, free from the taint and consciousness of sin, is altogether an evangelical doctrine, prefigured in old symbolical rites, but first anticipated by the yearnings of a soul smitten to death by sin. Cf. 1 S. x. 9.

renew a right spirit] **a stedfast spirit**, one not disquieted by fears or doubts, a mind stayed on the Lord, and therefore kept in perfect peace. See Isai. xxvi. 3.

11. *thy holy spirit*] The Spirit whereby David was consecrated to his kingly office, and endued with the gifts and graces requisite for discharging its duties. See 1 S. xvi. 13, where it is said that after he was anointed by

salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

13 *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from †bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

† Heb. *bloods.*

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; ‖else would I give *it:* thou delightest not in burnt offering.

‖ Or, *that I should give it.*

17 [d]The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

[d] Is. 57. 15 & 66. 2.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with

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Samuel, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." The Psalmist must also have remembered that at the same time the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and have felt that he had incurred the most imminent danger of a similar abandonment.

12. *the joy of thy salvation*] The holy joy inseparable from the realization of God's saving grace.

with thy free spirit] Or, **let a free spirit sustain me.** The word rendered "free" means willing, generous, spontaneously seeking and urging to goodness. Cf. Ps. liv. 6. In Job xxx. 15 the word is used absolutely for the soul of a good man. The Psalmist prays that his own spirit may become such under divine influence, and sustain him in after trials and temptations.

13. *Then will I teach*] The Hebrew implies a longing, I would fain teach transgressors Thy ways, those who, like me, have committed heinous sins. Such a desire is one of the surest signs of spiritual repentance.

be converted] Or, "return;" David speaks not of conversion from unbelief, but of restoration to a state of grace.

14. *from bloodguiltiness*] Lit. "bloods:" the plural is exclusively used to denote bloodshed or murder: thus Gen. iv. 10. The blood of Uriah cries for vengeance like that of Abel. David cannot have a free spirit unless God silences the accuser. (Hitzig objects that דמים means "bloodshed," not bloodguiltiness, but the reference to Genesis gives a satisfactory explanation. David might well pray to be saved from the blood calling for vengeance.)

15. *O Lord*] Even here David does not use the name Jehovah, but Adonai, *i.e.* Lord, Master.

open thou] Or, **Thou wilt open**; his lips have been closed by guilt; when the conscience is freed, prayers and thanksgivings will flow from it freely and copiously.

16. *thou desirest not*] See introduction. David is speaking of personal guilt: that, he feels, cannot be cleansed by sacrifice. God has no pleasure in sacrifices offered in place of inward contrition.

17. *The sacrifices of God*] *i.e.* those sacrifices which God really approves, and which are the results of His own work. His fatherly chastisement breaks the spirit, which He then pities and accepts. The saying of Samuel (1 S. xv. 22), the passage in Ps. l. 14, and this word, taken together, complete the true principles of sacrificial offerings, which represent obedience, gratitude, and repentance. It was possibly on this account that this psalm was placed by the collector immediately after that of Asaph.

18. This and the following verse are supposed by most of the later commentators, and by some of an earlier age, to have been added during, or immediately after, the Babylonish captivity: but the connection of thought appears sufficiently clear and satisfactory. David has just declared that he puts no trust in sacrifices offered for the expiation of his personal guilt; for himself he has but one offering (unfeigned repentance), but as a king he feels differently: he can promise abundant sacrifices if in His goodness God will complete (*i.e.* enable him to complete) the building of the walls of Jerusalem. The expressions which he uses are exactly appropriate to his own time, when he considerably enlarged the city (2 S. v. 9 and 11), and encompassed the whole with walls, according to Josephus ('Ant.' VII. iii. § 2), who on such a point is not likely to be misinformed. This must have occupied some considerable time, and it has been lately shewn (by Mr Simpson in an excellent article in the 'Christian Observer,' No. 333) that the walls were in progress, probably approaching their completion, just about the time of David's fall. Nothing can be more natural than this allusion under such circumstances, when the king might well feel that his crime might bring with it a punishment which would be detrimental to his people. It must be observed that there is no word which implies that the walls were in ruins; the Psalmist does not speak of rebuilding, but of building; and above all, he makes no mention of the temple, which would have been the

burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

PSALM LII.

1 *David, condemning the spitefulness of Doeg, prophesieth his destruction.* 6 *The righteous shall rejoice at it.* 8 *David, upon his confidence in God's mercy, giveth thanks.*

To the chief Musician, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, [a] when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

a 1 Sam. 22.

WHY boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God *endureth* continually.

2 Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

3 Thou lovest evil more than good; *and* lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.

4 Thou lovest all devouring words, [1] O *thou* deceitful tongue.

5 God shall likewise [†] destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of *thy* dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

6 The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:

[1] Or, and *the deceitful tongue.*
[†] Heb. *beat thee down.*

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first consideration with any devout Israelite after the captivity. That David should close a hymn full of intense personal feelings with a prayer for his country accords well with all that we know of his generous and kingly nature, and shews that he was truly sustained by "a free spirit."

PSALM LII.

This psalm is remarkable for its impetuous and fiery spirit: the writer is full of indignation against a person who is described as mighty, and trusting in riches, an evil speaker, malicious, and deceitful. The utter ruin of that person is predicted or denounced in terms of burning indignation. In the inscription it is said that the psalm was written on an occasion which would account for and justify the bitterness of the writer's spirit: when Doeg the Edomite informed Saul of David's coming to the house of Ahimelech, which led to the cruel massacre of eighty-five priests by the hands of the informer. There is no reason to reject this inscription; little as we know of Doeg's position, yet what is known accords with the notices in the psalm.

The first verse is introductory, then follow five strophes (two verses each), the close of the first and the second being marked by Selah.

1. *O mighty man*] Doeg was the chief of Saul's herdsmen, a position, of course, held by a person of great bodily strength, able to defend his charge against the marauders. He was at Nob, "detained before the Lord" (see 1 S. xxi. 7), an expression which implies that he was undergoing a process of purification, not improbably necessitated by some previous crime.

2. *mischiefs*] Or, **malignity**. The word occurs often in the psalms (see note on v. 9, where the A.V. has "wickedness") in the sense of ruinous, unfathomable evil, destructive malignity.

working deceitfully] Or, "working treachery," as a razor cuts suddenly and without warning, so Doeg, leaving Nob, of course without intimation of hostile purposes, caused the sudden destruction of David's friends. Cf. Ps. v. 9, and lvii. 4.

3. *Thou lovest*] The Psalmist attributes the crime not to any temptation from without, but to an inward and deliberate preference of evil to good. To *love* evil, lying, and malice, is the characteristic of the utter reprobate.

more than good] Or, "instead of good," the true and natural object of love.

4. *devouring words*] This expression again points at the specific result of the malicious tale: devouring words are words that destroy, cause sudden and utter ruin. Compare Ps. xxxv. 25.

5. *likewise*] This imprecation exactly corresponds to Doeg's crime: the divine law is one of exact retribution: he had broken into the house of David's friends, seized them, dragged them forth, rooted them out of the land, and he must undergo the same infliction, not for a time, not for once, but for ever. The force of the imprecation, and of the hope expressed in the following verse, depends upon an inward, if undeveloped, presentiment of a retribution extending beyond the limits of the present life. See Ps. xlix. 14.

thy dwelling place] Lit. "from the tent." This again points distinctly to a shepherd or herdsman.

6. *shall laugh*] The exultation of the righteous at the just punishment of the wicked is frequently described in Holy Scripture. It is inseparable from a hearty and thorough sympathy with God's law. That punishment which it is consistent with God's attributes to inflict, it cannot be inconsistent for His people to view with a stern and holy gratification, utterly distinct from the indulgence of personal feelings of revenge or animosity. It was impossible for David not to desire the punishment of the treacherous murderer, not

7 Lo, *this is* the man *that* made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* strengthened himself in his [1]wickedness.

[1] Or, *substance.*

8 But I *am* like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

9 I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done *it:* and I will wait on thy name; for *it is* good before thy saints.

PSALM LIII.

1 *David describeth the corruption of a natural man.* 4 *He convinceth the wicked by the light of their own conscience.* 6 *He glorieth in the salvation of God.*

To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

THE [a]fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: [b]*there is* none that doeth good.

[a] Ps. 10. 4. & 14. 1, &c.

[b] Rom. 3. 12.

2 God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did seek God.

3 Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

5 There [†]were they in great fear, *where* no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth *against* thee: thou hast put *them* to shame, because God hath despised them.

[†] Heb. *they feared a fear.*

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to rejoice in the certainty of retribution. Cf. Pss. xl. 3, lxiv. 8, 9; Job xxii. 19.

7. Here again the Psalmist goes to the root of the evil; it began with alienation from God, was promoted by love of riches, such as Saul would of course heap on his unscrupulous adherent, and attained its full development in a heart strong only in its longings for evil.

wickedness] The same word which in *v.* 2 is rendered A. V. mischiefs. Here it denotes **malignity**, or desire of evil. A man first yields to the desire, then encourages it, until it attains to absolute and exclusive mastery.

8, 9. Each trait of the description of the true servant of God is suggested by the contrast between him and the wicked. They make not God their strength, the Psalmist lives and prospers in God's house: they trust in riches, he in God's mercy: they are wholly given up to evil lusts, he waits only on God's name.

8. *green olive tree*] It is objected to this figure that there is no mention of trees growing in the court of the temple; but the psalm refers to the tabernacle at Nob, which was probably situate on the northern summit of the Mount of Olives, and olives may naturally have formed a grove within its precincts; one more indication of the genuineness of this psalm. The answer that the expression is purely figurative (as in Ps. xcii. 13) is not satisfactory; Scriptural figures are taken from realities, and this was doubtless suggested by what the Psalmist had observed in his frequent visits to the sanctuary.

9. *thou hast done it*] Or, "Thou hast done," omitting the word "it;" a very striking expression, here as elsewhere (*e.g.* Ps. xxii. 31) declaring the Psalmist's absolute confidence in the accomplishment of the will of God.

and I will wait, &c.] Or, **and I will wait for Thy name, for it is good, in the presence of Thy saints.** David will wait patiently for the manifestation of goodness, involved in the very name of God, among His faithful and favoured people (*hasidim*); see note on Ps. l. 5. The expression, however, is somewhat obscure. The Syr. "I will proclaim Thy name, that it is good," is more in accordance with the Psalmist's style, and on that ground is adopted by Hupfeld; but such an emendation requires the support of MSS., which is here wanting.

Psalm LIII.

This psalm is nearly identical with the 14th, differing chiefly in the inscription and in the substitution of the name Elohim for Jehovah. There can be little doubt that one is a recension of the other, with some slight alterations, for which it is not easy to give a satisfactory account. See notes on Psalm xiv., and introd. to Psalm xlii.

Mahalath] The word probably means "sickness," and may indicate a melancholy tune, adapted to the sombre strain of thought which pervades the psalm.

5. This verse appears to have been added by a later Psalmist, probably in the time of Jehoshaphat or of Hezekiah, when Jerusalem was saved from imminent ruin by the sudden and miraculous destruction of invading armies.

b. † will salva-, &c.

6 †Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

PSALM LIV.

1 *David, complaining of the Ziphims, prayeth for salvation.* 4 *Upon his confidence in God's help he promiseth sacrifice.*

Sam. 9 &

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, [a]when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

SAVE me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.

2 Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

4 Behold, God *is* mine helper: the Lord *is* with them that uphold my soul.

5 He shall reward evil unto †mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth.

† Heb. *those that observe me.*

6 I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for *it is* good.

7 For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen *his desire* upon mine enemies.

PSALM LV.

1 *David in his prayer complaineth of his fearful case.* 9 *He prayeth against his enemies, of whose wickedness and treachery he complaineth.* 16 *He comforteth himself in God's preservation of him, and confusion of his enemies.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

PSALM LIV.

A psalm composed in imminent danger: according to the inscription, which there is no reason to question, when David was betrayed by the Ziphites. See 1 S. xxiii. 19 and xxvi. 1.

The division into two strophes of three and four verses is marked by Selah, *v.* 3.

1. *by thy name*] *i.e.* by the manifestation of the attributes which the name of God signifies; by His goodness, power, truth. Cf. Ps. v. 11, lii. 9.

strength] Or, "might." The Hebrew word is derived from *gibbor*, "hero," an appellation of the God of hosts; see note on Ps. xlv. 3.

3. *strangers*] This translation is quite literal, but the word has the secondary meaning "enemies," cruel and unsympathizing foes, and that is probably the sense in this passage. The Ziphites were Jews, strangers not in blood, but in spirit. It is possible, however, that David may allude to certain foreigners in the army of Saul, such as Doeg the Edomite, and the Cushite, who were among his bitterest enemies. Saul may have specially chosen them as persons unrestrained by any religious feelings, not likely to set God before their eyes.

oppressors] Or, **fierce ones**; the two words, "aliens" and "fierce (A.V. 'terrible') ones," are thus combined by Isaiah, xxv. 5.

seek after my soul] Cf. 1 S. xxiii. 15 and Ps. xxiii. 5, xxvi. 9, 10.

4. *with them*] *i.e.* "among them," "one of them;" a not uncommon idiom (cf. Judg. xi. 35; Ps. cxviii 7), which does not mean that David has many upholders, of whom God is one, but that He is the one true upholder, on Whom all others depend.

5. *enemies*] Literally, "watchers;" persons who lie in ambush, watching an occasion to destroy their enemy. Cf. Ps. v. 8.

in thy truth] Or, **by Thy truth**; by the manifestation of that faithfulness which is expressed in God's name; see note on *v.* 1.

6. *I will freely sacrifice*] *i.e.* offer a freewill sacrifice, such as a grateful heart willingly offers. The expression is the usual one for sacrifices of thanksgiving. Cf. Num. xv. 3.

I will praise, &c.] Ps. lii. 9.

7. *For he hath delivered me*] The strong faith of the Psalmist realizes the deliverance as already accomplished; he has no hesitation therefore in vowing a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

mine eye hath seen his desire, &c.] Lit. **mine eye hath looked upon mine enemies**, sc. with triumph. For the idiom, which is very common in the psalms, see note on xxii. 17, lix. 10, xcii. 11, cxviii. 7. It occurs twice in the inscription on the Moabitish stone, lines 4 and 7, where Dr Ginsburg, "I will see my desire on him."

PSALM LV.

This beautiful psalm comes from the very depths of David's heart; it expresses feelings, which give the tone to all the psalms composed about the time when the conspiracy of Absalom was proceeding; and there is every reason for assigning it to that period of David's life. We have first (1—8) a description of the Psalmist's bitter anguish, and longings for deliverance from his slan-

GIVE ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath † overwhelmed me.

† Heb. *covered me.*

6 And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at rest.

7 Lo, *then* would I wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness. Selah.

8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm *and* tempest.

9 Destroy, O Lord, *and* divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go about it

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derers and enemies, followed (9—23) by alternate imprecations, and prayers, and vivid pictures of signs of an approaching insurrection; one person is singled out as once the dearest and most trusted friend of the king, now become the most bitter and treacherous of his foes; still hope is not quenched; it bursts out with fitful gleams through the psalm, which closes with expressions of perfect confidence in God's justice and love.

Hitzig, who gives a masterly analysis of the psalm, attributes it to Jeremiah, pointing out the flight into the wilderness, Jer. ix. 2, and the possibility that Pashur (Jer. xx. 1, 6) *may* have been an early friend. De Wette and Hupfeld state the obvious objections to this hypothesis; and it seems strange that any should fail to recognize the adaptation to the circumstances of David.

On the general tenour of this and similar psalms see introduction to Ps. xlii.

The ejaculation (*v.* 9) marks the division into two parts: the strophes are somewhat irregular, marking vehemence of feeling.

2. *I mourn in my complaint*] Or, "I wander in my moaning," *i.e.* am tossed about to and fro in the feverish unrest of anxiety and sorrow. The word rendered "mourn" indicates perhaps delirious wandering of spirit.

make a noise] Or, "groan aloud;" the same word is used Ps. xlii. 11. It properly denotes disturbance, uproar; here violent emotion, or groaning. In *v.* 17 it is rendered "cry aloud."

3. *oppression*] The word (which occurs only in this passage) implies that the enemy was in a position which enabled him to drive the Psalmist into "a great strait." Every word suits the condition of David just before his flight; the threats of the conspirators were louder than heretofore; they had long watched him; now they speak out, accuse him of deep criminality, and drive him almost to desperation.

cast iniquity upon me] This probably represents the true sense of the Hebrew, which is somewhat obscure; lit. "cause evil or guilt to fall on me." Cf. 2 S. xvi. 7, 8, "The LORD hath *returned upon thee* all the blood," &c.

5. *horror hath overwhelmed me*] Job xxi. 6, where A.V. has "trembling."

7. *Lo, then would I wander*] Or, **Lo, afar off would I flee, I would lodge in the wilderness.** The same wish is expressed by Jer. ix. 2. The comparison of the two passages brings out the marvellous beauty of this passage, unsurpassed for depth of feeling and exquisite imagery; to which no translation, save that into music by Mendelssohn, can do justice. In his flight from Absalom David did *lodge* in the wilderness. Cf. 2 S. xv. 28, xvii. 16.

8. The last words might mean "more swiftly than stormy wind and tempest;" but our version is quite right: as the dove rushes swiftly to her rocky nest, escaping from the storm, so would David fain flee away from the outburst of furious passions. Dr Kay observes that in 2 S. xv. 14 David says, "Arise, and let us flee; for we shall have no escape (the word here rendered *refuge*) from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he speed and overtake us."

9. The king rouses himself, passing with an abrupt transition from complaining to indignant imprecations.

divide their tongues] The expression is singular, but it is understood to mean a wish that the tongues, which now combine in execrations against David, may be scattered, and the conspiracy broken up; probably with an allusion to the confusion of tongues at Babel. In Gen. x. 25 the same word is used.

violence and strife] The indications of a revolutionary movement, which David had noted, but was evidently unable to suppress. Cf. Jer. vi. 7.

10. An animated description of the excitement of the people, prowling about the walls,

upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow *are* in the midst of it.

11 Wickedness *is* in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

12 For *it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me; then I could have borne *it:* neither *was it* he that hated me *that* did magnify *himself* against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

13 But *it was* thou, †a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

† Heb. *a man according to my rank.*

14 †We took sweet counsel together, *and* walked unto the house of God in company.

† Heb. *Who sweetened counsel.*

15 Let death seize upon them, *and* let them go down quick into ‖hell: for wickedness *is* in their dwellings, *and* among them.

‖ Or, *the grave.*

16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

17 Evening, and morning, and at

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watching, it may be, the approach of confederates, and fixing on points best adapted for an outbreak, or standing in groups here and there in the streets and open places, and preluding the insurrection by acts of violence.

mischief] Or, **iniquity**.

11. *Wickedness*] Or, "destruction" (Ps. v. 10), a vivid personification: the city is become the home of destruction; fraud and treachery do not stir out of her market-place. In the utter corruption of the people David saw the true cause of the triumph of his enemies, and at the same time the assurance of their ultimate discomfiture.

streets] "street," *i. e.* the broad open place near the city-gate, where justice was administered. See notes on Job xxix. 7.

12. Here follows the description of one individual, the leader and originator of the whole movement. Our thoughts are immediately directed to Ahithophel, in whom all the older commentators recognize the original of the portraiture: nor do the objections of modern critics appear to be weighty. Hupfeld considers that this description, and the verses, 20, 21, which complete it, are misplaced, and should follow *v.* 3: but the abruptness of the transition is at once highly poetic, and most natural in the disturbed state of the Psalmist's spirit, who is almost delirious in his grief; see *v.* 2.

it was not an enemy] To this it is objected that Ahithophel had cause of provocation, since Bathsheba is supposed to have been his granddaughter; but the fact, though probable, is not certain; nor is it clear that one so utterly unprincipled and selfish as Ahithophel would have felt, at any rate have shewn, any indignation, when David raised her to the highest rank among his wives. It is said, too, that Ahithophel came to Jerusalem shortly before the outbreak: that is true, but the psalm was composed at that time, and Ahithophel may have long before directed the plans of Absalom, who would not have sought out a trusted follower of his father, had he not been sure of his support.

13. *mine equal*] Literally, "a man according to my estimate or position," but our version expresses the meaning. David speaks of one who is on terms of such intimate familiarity, so honoured and esteemed, as to be justly regarded as an equal; so far of course as could be the case with a subject. The position of Ahithophel fully bears out this view; see 2 S. xv. 12, xvi. 23. "My guide" could not be said with equal propriety of any one but Ahithophel. The Hebrew (alluph) is thus rendered by LXX., Vulg., and has certainly that meaning in Gen. xxxvi. 15. Modern critics generally take it to mean "associate."

acquaintance] Or, confidant.

14. *in company*] Or, **in the throng**, that is, in the midst of the crowd of worshippers. Cf. Ps. xlii. 4, and lxiv. 2 (where A. V. has "insurrection"). David represents himself as choosing one favoured and trusted friend to accompany him and join his devotions at a great national festival. Such a friend he found in one whose counsels were to him as "the oracle of God." See 2 S. xvi. 23.

15. An outburst of fury, which the combination of malignity and hypocrisy in Ahithophel alone could justify.

seize upon them] Or, **surprise them**, come upon them suddenly, in just retribution for their own unforeseen treachery.

quick into hell] Or, "Sheol;" but our version is quite correct, if we remember that, although David may not realize hell as a place of endless torture, he does regard it as the last home of the impenitent. To go quick into hell, is to perish with full consciousness of a miserable fate; not perhaps without an allusion to Korah and his company, Num. xvi. For the fulfilment of the curse see the account of Ahithophel's suicide, 2 S. xvii. 23; and the piercing of Absalom's heart *while he was yet alive*, ib. xviii. 14.

16. Another change of tone, now sweet and solemn, with the name Jehovah, for the first time in the psalm, speaking of inward hope and sure salvation. There may possibly be an allusion to prayers habitually offered

noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

18 He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: for there were many with me.

19 God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. [1]Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

20 He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: [†]he hath broken his covenant.

21 *The words* of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war *was* in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet *were* they drawn swords.

22 [a]Cast thy [1]burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

23 But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: [†]bloody and deceitful men [†]shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

[1] Or, *With whom also there be no changes, yet they fear not God.*
[†] Heb. *he hath profaned.*
[a] Ps. 37. 5. Matth. 6. 25. Luke 12. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
[1] Or, *gift.*
[†] Heb. *men of bloods and deceit.*
[†] Heb. *shall not half their days.*

thrice daily, see Dan. vi. 10, but the Psalmist is speaking now of his unceasing supplication in the time of trial.

18. *from the battle that was against me*] The Hebrew word rendered "battle" occurs once only in the historical books, viz. 2 S. xvii. 11, where it is used by Hushai, David's friend, in reference to an attack on the king. But David here refers to former deliverances. God has given him the victory ofttimes when all seemed lost, and will not fail him now.

19. See Note below. The last clause may be rendered more literally, "who have no changes, and they fear not God," but the meaning is doubtful; it may be "who have hitherto gone on without changes, or reverses of fortune;" see Job xxi. 7—15. The Hebrew word denotes properly changes of succession, such as of one garment or season for another; hence by a natural metaphor vicissitudes of fortune.

20, 21. David reverts suddenly to the fixed and deepest thought in his heart, the treachery of his friend. Deeply as he felt the revolt of his son, that probably did not surprise him; it was in accordance with previous indications of his character, but Ahithophel's treason came on him without any preparation.

20. *broken*] Or, "profaned," evidently with allusion to *v.* 14.

21. *butter*] Literally, "the butters of his mouth are smooth:" his words flow sweet and smooth like cream. Cf. Prov. v. 3, 4.

but war was in his heart] Lit. "but war his heart," *i. e.* **his heart was wholly war**, a very forcible idiom, signifying the complete absorption of the heart by hatred.

22. *thy burden*] The exact meaning of the word, which occurs nowhere else, is uncertain, but our version expresses the sense with sufficient accuracy. It may mean, as suggested in the margin of the A.V., "gift," viz. that which is given, appointed to man to bear. Thus Hupf. See 1 Pet. v. 7, where it is rendered "care." Vulg. curam, LXX. μέριμνάν σου.

23. This verse sounds like a prophetic anticipation of the suicide of Ahithophel, and the fate of Absalom (see note *v.* 15); but the Psalmist probably does but express a fixed conviction in the justice of God. Hupfeld again proposes a different arrangement, but abruptness is the characteristic of the psalm. The *last* word recalls the key-note struck in David's earliest psalms, vii. 1, xi. 1.

NOTE on PSALM LV. 19.

Hupfeld renders this verse "God will hear and answer me (יעננו with some MSS.), for He sitteth (as Judge) of old;" the latter clause he supposes to be misplaced, but interprets it as in the foot-note. With a slight change of punctuation, favoured by the LXX., the meaning would be, "God will hear (me) and humble them, and (for) He sitteth (as Judge) of old." The construction, however, is unsatisfactory, and the passage is probably imperfect.

PSALM LVI.

1 *David, praying to God in confidence of his word, complaineth of his enemies.* 9 *He professeth his confidence in God's word, and promiseth to praise him.*

To the chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, [1]Michtam of David, when the [a]Philistines took him in Gath.

[1] Or, *A golden Psalm of David.*
[a] 1 Sam. 21. 11.

BE merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

2 [†]Mine enemies would daily swallow *me* up: for *they be* many that fight against me, O thou most High.

[†] Heb. *Mine enemies.*

3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

5 Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts *are* against me for evil.

6 They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

7 Shall they escape by iniquity? in *thine* anger cast down the people, O God.

8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: *are they* not in thy book?

9 When I cry *unto thee*, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God *is* for me.

10 In God will I praise *his* word: in the LORD will I praise *his* word.

11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

PSALM LVI.

A psalm of prayer in a time of great affliction: according to the inscription, when David was taken by the Philistines in Gath. It bears every mark of the time when David was a fugitive, and persecuted by bitter enemies: retaining a perfect faith in the word and favour of God.

The divisions are clearly marked by the refrain at *v.* 4 and at *vv.* 10, 11, which are rather to be regarded as one verse. We have thus a beginning and close each of two verses, and three intervening strophes, 2, 3, and 3.

The inscription is obscure; the words Jonath-elem-rechokim mean "the dove of silence (*i.e.* the silent dove) of the far ones," *i.e.* either of far-off lands, or among aliens. It probably designates the tune to which the composition was recited, but is evidently adapted to the circumstances of the Psalmist. The place given to the psalm was probably suggested by its similarity to the preceding.

Michtam] See note on Ps. xvi. The next four psalms have the same designation.

took him in Gath] David's flight to Gath is related in 1 S. xxi. 10. He was received as a friend by Achish, but in great danger from the envy of the Philistine nobles. There is no notice in that passage of his having been actually seized, or taken by them, and doubts have therefore been thrown upon the genuineness or accuracy of this inscription: but it rests probably upon an ancient and independent record; a late compiler would have taken the account without alteration from the book of Samuel. The similarity of tone and structure between this and the following psalm is recognized by keen critics (*e.g.* Köster), as also the adaptation of thought and expression to the circumstances noted in the inscription.

1. *for man*] David uses here the word "*enosh*" (which has always the sense of weakness and fragility), evidently in antithesis to Elohim. He had applied it to Ahithophel in the preceding psalm, *v.* 13.

2. *enemies*] **watchers**; see note on Ps. liv. 5. This word suits the position of David at Gath.

O thou most High] The Hebrew word *marom*, *i.e.* "height," is thus rendered by most of the older commentators. It is now taken by most critics to mean "in pride," "proudly," "haughtily;" but the old interpretation is more forcible, and quite as near to the original. In either case the expression is elliptical, and has no exact parallel.

4. *In God*] *i.e.* with God's help, by His grace; He will enable me to praise His word, gratefully to acquiesce in His revealed will. The Psalmist's spirit lives and moves in God, as the source of all light and spiritual influence. This is the true refrain, or key-note of the psalm. See *vv.* 10 and 11.

5, 6. This description is singularly applicable to David's position among the envious nobles at the court of Achish. It could not have been written either at the court of Saul (for he was a fugitive, see *v.* 8), or when he was surrounded by stanch comrades in his exile. Still it does not speak of his being actually arrested, and does not therefore seem to have suggested the inscription.

7. *Shall they escape by iniquity?*] The original is very obscure; but if the text be sound it probably has the meaning which is expressed in our version: see Note below.

8. *tellest my wanderings*] *i.e.* God keeps an exact account of David's wanderings, notes every incident of his restless flight. Some commentators, not content with this natural and beautiful thought, would refer "wanderings" to the Psalmist's mental wanderings or complainings; see lv. 2.

into thy bottle] A very bold, but expressive metaphor. As the traveller carefully preserves water, milk, or wine in leather bottles or bladders for a journey, so David trusts that God keeps in memory every tear which he sheds. They are precious as memorials of many a sorrowful pleading, many a prayer offered with streaming eyes.

12 Thy vows *are* upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: *wilt* not *thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

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12. *Thy vows are upon me*] *i.e.* vows offered to God on occasions of deliverance from grief and danger. See Num. xxx. 6, marg.

13. *light of the living*] See Job xxxiii. 30.

NOTE on Psalm lvi. 7.

The conjecture of Hupfeld, פלס for פלט, is ingenious and probable; but conjectural emendations to elude a difficulty are not adopted by cautious critics. Delitzsch supposes that על און may be equivalent to "in vain," "not at all;" but this is without authority. The sense appears to be "considering their iniquity shall they escape?" על און, upon iniquity, *i.e.* that being their foundation, resting altogether on iniquity.

PSALM LVII.

1 *David in prayer fleeing unto God complaineth of his dangerous case.* 7 *He encourageth himself to praise God.*

To the chief Musician, ‖ Al-taschith, Michtam of David, [a] when he fled from Saul in the cave.

‖ Or, *Destroy not.*
[a] 1 Sam. 24. 1.

BE merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until *these* calamities be overpast.

2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth *all things* for me.

3 He shall send from heaven, and save me [1] *from* the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

[1] Or, [illegible]

4 My soul *is* among lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are set on fire, *even* the sons of men, whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

Psalm LVII.

This psalm closely resembles the preceding. It was composed, as we learn from the inscription, "when David fled from Saul in the cave," *i.e.* either the cave at Engedi, in the high limestone ridge to the west of the Dead Sea, or more probably at Adullam, near the district of the Philistines. This historical notice is rejected by some modern critics, but is scarcely open to fair objection; even Köster considers that it is highly probable, and in accordance with the tone and spirit of the composition. The whole psalm is full of the feelings expressed so powerfully in Ps. lvi., and concludes with a strain of exulting and triumphant confidence; on this account it is selected as one of the psalms in our services for Easter Sunday.

The psalm is divided into two parts, distinctly marked by the refrain, 5 and 11; each part has a striking similarity of structure.

Al-taschith] *i.e.* **Destroy not.** Three other psalms (lviii. lix. lxxv.) have the same title, which well expresses their general purport. In this psalm there is evidently a direct allusion to David's answer to Abishai, when he would have slain Saul with the spear, *Destroy him not*, Al-taschithehu.

in the cave] The cave of Adullam. See 1 S. xxii. 1, and 2 S. xxiii. 13.

1. *my soul trusteth in thee*] Or, **takes refuge**; the word is repeated in the next clause.

shadow of thy wings] A beautiful and common figure (see Ps. xvii. 8, and xxxvi. 7), suggested probably by the exquisite passage Deut. xxxii. 11, and adopted by our Lord. See too Ruth ii. 12.

calamities] Literally, "destructions," dangers threatening him on all sides with destruction; cf. Ps. lii. 2. David uses the word in that and in other passages specially of evil machinations.

2. *performeth*] Or, "accomplisheth," here, as in Ps. cxxxviii. 8, in the sense "accomplisheth what is good for me."

3. *from the reproach*] The construction of the clause is obscure. The most probable meaning is, "though he that would swallow me up revileth;" but our A.V. is defensible. See Note below. Cf. Ps. lvi. 1.

4. Here again the meaning is clear, but the construction abrupt and rugged; lit. "As for my soul, in the midst of lions might I lie, for burning are the sons of men." David contrasts his actual condition in the cave where he has found a refuge with the lot which would have been his among the followers of

5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

[b] Ps. 7. 16. & 9. 15.

6 [b]They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

[c] Ps. 108. 1, &c. ‖ Or, *prepared*.

7 [c]My heart is ‖fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

9 I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

[d] Ps. 36. 5. & 108. 4.

10 [d]For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

11 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

Saul; here in the lions' den he is far safer. "The sons of men" may refer to Ps. liii. 2.

whose teeth are spears and arrows] Cf. Prov. xxx. 14.

tongue a sharp sword] See Ps. lv. 21.

5. *above the heavens*] *i.e.* let the deliverance be such that heaven and earth may recognize the triumph of righteousness.

6. *they are fallen*] There may be an allusion to Saul's adventure in the cave at Engedi, 1 S. xxiv., but the metaphor is very common in the psalms, see Ps. vii. 15, 16, and ix. 15.

8. *I myself will awake early*] This may be rendered at once more literally and more poetically, "I will wake the morning;" a beautiful figure not confined to Hebrew poetry—thus in Ovid ('Met.' XI. 597, quoted by Hengstenberg) the cock "evocat auroram." This rendering is adopted by Hupfeld and Delitzsch.

NOTES on PSALM LVII. 3, 4.

3. חרף שאפי, lit. either "He revileth the person who persecutes me," or "He that persecutes me revileth." The objection to the former rendering is that חרף is not elsewhere attributed to God; the latter presents an ellipsis and a change of tense scarcely accounted for. Hitzig would alter חרף to מכף, "from the hand." The passage may perhaps be misplaced, but no satisfactory change has been suggested.

4. Several points are overlooked by most translators in this verse. אשכבה implies a wish. The Psalmist desires to lie down. The fact that he was in the cave is forgotten. The accents are certainly incorrect, as all admit; if disregarded we may take להטים (not "blazing," but "burning," *i.e.* "consuming") as a predicate of בני אדם, which gives the sense suggested in the note. Dr Kay divides the clauses differently, but the Masoretic punctuation appears correct.

PSALM LVIII.

1 *David reproveth wicked judges,* 3 *describeth the nature of the wicked,* 6 *devoteth them to God's judgments,* 10 *whereat the righteous shall rejoice.*

‖ Or, *Destroy not, A golden Psalm of David.*

To the chief Musician, ‖Al-taschith, Michtam of David.

DO ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

PSALM LVIII.

A psalm of stern reproof, such as a king might address to unrighteous judges, the great and permanent evil of oriental despotisms. It belongs probably to the first year of David's reign; the style is rugged and obscure, the tone solemn and earnest, such as might well become a prince succeeding to a period of anarchy and turbulence. He describes the wickedness as so great, so thoroughly identified with the nature of the oppressors, as to leave no hope of improvement, no resource but prayer for their extirpation.

The psalm is assigned to a writer in the time of the exile by some critics, chiefly on the ground that the wicked judges must be heathens. Hupfeld observes truly that similar reproaches are often addressed to judges in Israel. The obscurity of the language points to an early date, nor is there any sufficient reason for rejecting the inscription, found in all the old versions.

1. *O congregation*] The word so ren-

3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray †as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

† Heb. *from the belly.*

4 Their poison *is* †like the poison of a serpent: *they are* like the deaf ‖adder *that* stoppeth her ear;

† Heb. *according to the likeness.*
‖ Or, *asp.*

5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, ‖charming never so wisely.

‖ Or, be *the charmer never so cunning.*

6 Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

7 Let them melt away as waters *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to shoot* his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

8 As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* pass away: *like* the untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun.

9 Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, †both living, and in *his* wrath.

† Heb. *as living as wrath.*

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dered is very obscure. Elsewhere it means "silence," "dumbness:" hence some translate "Do ye indeed speak righteousness in silence?" a phrase which no ingenuity can make really intelligible. The meaning "congregation" rests on no sufficient authority, nor is the reproof addressed to the people, but to the judges. Critics have therefore proposed a very slight alteration which gives the sense "O ye gods," *i.e.* O ye judges, representatives of the divine power; but it is doubtful whether such a form of address is justified by passages alleged in its support. See Hupf. and Hitzig. It seems on the whole probable that the word has been interpolated by a transcriber; there is no indication of the meaning "congregation," or "silence," in early translations. See Note below.

2. *Yea*] This word introduces the true answer—far from speaking righteousness you work wickedness.

ye weigh] A bitter sarcasm; instead of meting out justice, accurately weighing all things in the balance of justice (see Job xxxi. 6), you weigh out and distribute your own violence.

3. *from the womb*] Sinners from infancy onwards. The Psalmist however does not here declare the general doctrine of original or birth-sin: he speaks simply of the desperately wicked. Compare, however, Ps. li. 5, and Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21.

4. *poison of a serpent*] See Deut. xxxii. 33; Job xx. 14—16; Isai. xi. 8.

deaf adder] The adder appears to be specially noticed both as one of the most venomous snakes and as that which serpent-charmers find most difficulty in subduing. Cf. Eccl. x. 11. The antiquity and wide prevalence of the custom to which David alludes are well known to all readers of Eastern travels. See Bochart, 'Hieroz.' II. iii. 6; Niebuhr, 'Reiseb.' I. 189; Lane's 'Egypt.'

5. *charmers*] Literally, "whisperers." A word used specially to describe the inarticulate murmurs of enchanters.

charming] Or, **of one that bindeth charms skilfully.** The phrase "bindeth charms" is generally understood to refer to some process of conjuring, probably by tying knots, a symbol of the restraining force of the incantation. The word rendered "skilfully" means thoroughly experienced, an adept in charming. The Egyptians called an expert magician *rech chetu*, sc. one who knows things.

6. *Break their teeth*] The power of wrong-doing must be put down: if the poison cannot be drawn out, the fangs must be broken. In the next clause the Psalmist reverts to his favourite image, and describes the cruel judge as the lion in his full vigour, whose great jaw-teeth must be broken. Cf. Job iv. 10.

7. The figures again change; let them melt away like waters poured out, and running to waste. The same word for dissolution is used Job vii. 5.

when he bendeth] The italics in our version shew that the original is obscure = literally "he treadeth (*i.e.* as our version explains, bendeth his bow to shoot) his arrows, so (*i.e.* just at that moment, ere he can adjust the bow) let them be broken; let them and their instruments of evil perish together." It is possible however that the subject of "shooteth" is God. "He shooteth his arrows, so are they cut off."

8. *untimely birth*] Or, "abortion;" compare Job iii. 16; Eccles. vi. 3—5.

9. The meaning of this obscure and difficult verse appears to be, **Before your pots feel the thorn** (*i.e.* before the fire of the thorns makes itself felt), **so be it** (the thorn) **quick or be it dry, the whirlwind will sweep it away.** The wicked are compared to a heap of thorns, some green, some dried up, lighted under a caldron, and then swept away by a sudden storm. The words rendered "living" and "in his wrath" are supposed by some to describe the flesh in the pot, either quick, or heated through: but this is contrary to the statement; the thorns are swept away before they have heated the pots: all the plans of the wicked are frustrated by

10 The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 So that a man shall say, Verily *there is* †a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

† Heb. *fruit of the*, &c.

their sudden and complete destruction. The comparison of wicked men to thorns, easily set on fire, and scattered by a blast of wind, is familiar to David: cf. 2 S. xxiii. 6, 7: "The sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns—they shall be utterly burnt with fire." See also Ps. cxviii. 12. Cf. Note below.

10. *wash his feet*] A lesson not of vengeance but of warning. David has had no part in the destruction; that has been the work of Him to Whom vengeance belongeth. It must be remembered that David shed no blood of his subjects, even when rebellious, without the most absolute necessity, and that his own fault had been rather that of remissness and over-indulgence.

11. *a God that judgeth*] This is one of the very few passages in which the Hebrew Elohim is construed with a plural predicate. Hence instead of "God" it may be better to render the word "Deity" or Godhead, "truly the Godhead judgeth the earth." Kay understands it to refer to "manifold divine agencies."

NOTES on Psalm LVIII. 1, 8, 9.

1. The LXX., Vulg. and Syriac, seem to have had a particle = ἄρα, utique. The Arab. "truly." Hitzig proposes here and in Ps. lvi. 1 to read לְאֻם=אֵלֶם, "people:" a suggestion not likely to be adopted. I should rather conjecture בְּנֵי אֵלִים, "sons of the mighty." Dr Kay gives an ingenious rendering, well adapted to the circumstances of David, supposing that the psalm was composed at the same date as the preceding—"Will ye indeed utter long silent judgment?" referring to 2 S. xv. 2—6. The words of Absalom are much to the point, "See, thy matters are good and right, *and yet none is deputed from the king to hear thee.*" But the expression "silence of justice" scarcely bears out the interpretation.

8. The first clause may be rendered, "as a snail which one crushes, and it perishes," or "as a snail goes melting away." The former is preferable as giving a true and forcible image (thus Delitzsch, who takes תמס to be the fut. apoc. Hiph. from מסה=מסס), but the construction is uncertain.

9. Dr Kay suggests a rendering of the text which is ingenious and striking. He observes that "*Charon*" is always used of *divine wrath*, and translates "Before your caldrons have felt the thorn-fire, even as raw flesh, even so shall hot fury sweep them away." The figure is that of a whirlwind sweeping away the banqueters' food. It seems however more suitable to the context to take the thorns with which the enemies of David are heating their caldron, in other words, preparing their machinations, as the point of comparison. Accepting *Charon* in the sense of "fiery wrath" we might render "Before your caldrons feel (*the fire of*) the thorns, even as quick, even so shall hot fury sweep them away;" but "quick" refers to the thorns. Like the thorn-bush, אטד, yet quick, half-lighted, the conspirators will be swept away by a blast of God's wrath. The second כמו is omitted in one MS., see Kennicott, but probably by oversight.

PSALM LIX.

1 *David prayeth to be delivered from his enemies.* 6 *He complaineth of their cruelty.* 8 *He trusteth in God.* 11 *He prayeth against them.* 16 *He praiseth God.*

To the chief Musician, ‖Al-taschith, Michtam of David; ᵃwhen Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

‖ Or, *Destroy not, A golden Psalm of David.*
ᵃ 1 Sam. 19. 11.

DELIVER me from mine enemies, O my God: †defend me from them that rise up against me.

† Heb. *set me on high.*

2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

3 For, lo, they lie in wait for my

Psalm LIX.

The inscription states the circumstances under which this psalm was composed, and it is borne out by the contents. David writes in imminent danger; troops of his enemies lie in wait to seize him, or prowl about the city uttering threats against him. He protests his innocence, prays for the overthrow of his foes, and expresses entire confidence in the mercy and protection of God. These points agree with the account in 1 S. xix., when Saul sent messengers to take away David's life, which was only preserved by the affection of his wife. This psalm is therefore, in all probability,

soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not *for* my transgression, nor *for* my sin, O LORD.

4 They run and prepare themselves without *my* fault: awake †to help me, and behold.

† Heb. *to meet me.*

5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

6 They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

7 Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords *are* in their lips: for [b]who, *say they*, doth hear?

[b] Ps. 10. 11. & 73. 11. & 94. 7.

8 But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

9 *Because of* his strength will I

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one of the very oldest writings of David which has been preserved to us. It bears all the distinctive characteristics of his early style, vehement, abrupt, graphic in its descriptions, and full of the feelings which were the mainspring of his spiritual life. It is objected that the mention of the heathen (5, 8), and the description of the enemies, applicable rather to brigands than to the king's guards, militate against this view, and various occasions have been suggested as more suitable to the feelings and thoughts; but the objections have little weight (see notes on 5, 6), and the conjectures of each commentator are, as usual, summarily rejected by others of equal learning.

The structure is highly artistic, and resembles that of other early psalms of David. The refrain at *v.* 10 and *v.* 17 divides it into two parts, subdivided severally at *v.* 5 and *v.* 13 by Selah.

Al-taschith] **Destroy not**, cf. *v.* 11, "slay them not," Kay. But the tone of feeling is different, and the reference therefore seems questionable.

1. *defend me*] Or, as marg., **set me on high**; sc. on a high place; see Ps. xx. 1, marg.

3. The "lying in wait," and the word "mighty" or strong ones (cf. Pss. x. 10, xxxviii. 19), are especially suitable to the emissaries of Saul, who watched David's house to slay him in the morning. The protestations of absolute innocence are found more frequently in psalms belonging to that period of David's life (cf. 1 S. xxiv. 11; Ps. vii. 3): they are also far more fitting in the case of a subject unjustly persecuted, than of one beset by foreign enemies, who would not be concerned with the question of his personal integrity.

4. *run and prepare themselves*] Both words denote the prompt and officious servility of hirelings.

awake to help me] A bold, but not uncommon address to God, see Ps. xliv. 23, one also that would specially suggest itself to David beset by assassins in the deep loneliness of night.

5. *O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel*] For the use of these names see note on 1 S. i. 3.

all the heathen] The Psalmist passes from a personal to a general supplication; he cannot think of his own danger and deliverance without reverting to the condition of his country. It has been observed (see note on Ps. liv. 3) that Saul appears to have employed aliens, especially when persecuting one who, as he well knew, was loved by all true Hebrews. These considerations meet the inference of a later date drawn from the mention of heathens.

wicked transgressors] The Hebrew words denote treachery and faithlessness; men who do evil regardless of all religious or moral considerations. David thus describes two classes of persecutors, such as Saul would naturally select, men who as aliens would be wholly without sympathy, and others who had treacherously deserted their comrade in the hour of trial. The strong emotion which this thought suggests is marked by the word Selah.

6. *They return at evening*] The meaning appears to be that after an unsuccessful search of the house on the first morning (1 S. xix. 11), Saul's emissaries return in the evening, prowl about the gates, snarling and growling like hounds at fault, and go to and fro in the city, probably in order to occupy every egress, and cut off David's flight.

7. *Behold*, &c.] **Lo! they pour out** *words*. **with their mouth.** The word properly denotes the seething of a caldron, the gushing of a spring of water, or the heaving of a fermenting mass. It is rendered "utter," Ps. xciv. 4; "poureth out," Prov. xv. 2, 28.

swords are in their lips] See Ps. lvii. 4.

for who, say they, doth hear?] Our version probably gives a true explanation by inserting "say they" in italics: cf. Ps. x. 11; Job xx. 12: but the words may represent the Psalmist's feelings and convey an expostulation; his enemies utter their threats without fear that they will be heard and punished by the righteous Judge.

8. *shalt laugh at them*] This phrase (a very common one in Hebrew poetry, see note on Ps. ii. 4) has a peculiar fitness if referred to the stratagem by which Saul's

wait upon thee: for God *is* †my defence.

† Heb. *my high place.*

10 The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see *my desire* upon †mine enemies.

† Heb. *mine observers.*

11 Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.

12 *For* the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying *which* they speak.

13 Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them*, that they *may* not *be*: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.

14 And at evening let them return; *and* let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

15 Let them wander up and down †for meat, ‖and grudge if they be not satisfied.

† Heb. *to eat.*
‖ Or, *if they be not satisfied, then they will stay all night.*

16 But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy

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emissaries were baffled and mocked, see 1 S. xix. 16: but it expresses generally the truth that the machinations of God's enemies are not less absurd than wicked; and one who judges them aright is struck not less forcibly by their utter folly than by their malignity. There is a hideous grotesqueness in detected villainy.

all the heathen] See note on *v.* 5.

9. *his strength*] The construction is difficult if "his" refers to the enemies described in the preceding verses, but David probably has in mind the "strength" of Saul his real enemy. This of course does not suit the views of those who reject the inscription, and find no other natural explanation of the sudden change of persons. See Note below.

defence] Or, "fortress," Ps. xviii. 2, where A. V. has "high tower."

10. The second part of the psalm begins here. It is even more obscure than the first; Delitzsch observes that the exposition is here so difficult in every detail that it is like deciphering an inscription; yet if the special circumstances are borne in mind, each word has a point.

11. *Slay them not*] This prayer is suitable to the circumstances of the inscription, but very unsuitable to any other which has been suggested. A prayer that God should not at once destroy the emissaries of the king, but frustrate their plans, scatter them, reduce them to want, as liars, blasphemers, and assassins, make them examples of punishment, and ultimately root them out of Israel, is neither unnatural nor unprovoked; but it would have no meaning if directed against foreign enemies, whom the Psalmist would wish to be destroyed at once, and against whom he would have no such personal feelings as those expressed in these imprecations. The application to the dispersion and miseries of the Hebrews for the murder of their Saviour is obvious, and stands or falls with the general principle of typical exposition. If David was, as the Church has ever believed, a type of Christ, and moved specially by the Spirit, then such utterances must have, not indeed a double meaning, but a double application.

12. *For the sin*, &c.] Lit. "the words of their lips are the sin of their mouth;" *i. e.* all their words are sheer sin, nothing but sin: thus Hupfeld; but the rendering of Ewald and Kay seems preferable, "Oh the sin of their mouth! Oh the word of their lips!"

in their pride] There may be, as most commentators hold, a reference to the words "who doth hear?" in *v.* 7: but David's psalms about this time are full of complaints of the pride and insolence of his enemies, the favourites of Saul.

13. *Consume them*] Or, **Make an end in wrath, make an end!** After undergoing such punishments as may warn the people, let them perish, that all may learn the truth which they have denied.

unto the ends of the earth] Wherever they may wander when scattered. Their punishment thus becomes directly subservient to the cause of truth; a prophetic utterance which, if not developed in the Psalmist's consciousness, has been illustrated by the dispersion of his countrymen.

14. *let them return*] Or, **they return,** &c. The Psalmist repeats *v.* 6; not, as in our version, expressing a wish, but describing a fact. He sees the troop return, hears their threats, and sees them prowling about like bloodhounds.

15. *Let them*] Or, **They prowl about to devour; if they are not satisfied, then will they pass the night;** the same imagery, but with one word, "pass the night," which fixes the sense. The guards took up their station at the door of David's house. 1 S. xix. 11.

16. *But I*] Or, **But as for me, I will sing,** &c. The "I" is emphatic, and contrasted with "they" in the preceding verse.

in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God *is* my defence, *and* the God of my mercy.

in the morning] The whole description implies a nightly attack. David has no doubt that when morning comes it will find him safe and grateful. It is hard to account for the rejection of so natural and obvious an interpretation.

NOTE on PSALM LIX. 9.

The old Versions had another reading; LXX. and Vulg. "my strength;" Syr. "my God." Thus Hitzig, "mein Schutz." He rejects the Hebrew with his usual confidence. Perowne follows him. The extreme facility of the correction is no recommendation.

PSALM LX.

1 *David, complaining to God of former judgment,* 4 *now, upon better hope, prayeth for deliverance.* 6 *Comforting himself in God's promises, he craveth that help whereon he trusteth.*

To the chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, ‖ Michtam of David, to teach; [a] when he strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.

‖ Or, *A golden Psalm.*
[a] 2 Sam. 8. 3, 13. 1 Chron. 18. 3.

O GOD, [b] thou hast cast us off, thou hast † scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.

2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

3 Thou hast shewed thy people

[b] Ps. 44. 9.
† Heb. *broken.*

PSALM LX.

According to the inscription this psalm belongs to the time when David was engaged in the great war with the Syrians and Ammonites, which lasted a considerable time, and ended with a complete victory, and great extension of the kingdom. It implies, however, that very serious and alarming reverses had taken place, of which no record is preserved in the brief accounts of 2 S. viii. and 1 Chro. xviii. 12. The Edomites had probably taken advantage of the absence of the king with his army, perhaps also of some check, of which rumours had reached them, and ravaged the southern district. The psalm expresses great affliction at the reverses, with a certain anticipation of victory. It could not have been composed in a later reign; the terms, in which Ephraim and the trans-Jordanic territories of the kingdom are named, are incompatible with any period after the separation of the ten tribes, still more so with any period after the captivity. The psalm is essentially Davidic in style, feeling, and historical allusions.

There are three strophes, the complaint with its bright hope, 1—4; the triumph, 5—8; the prayer and confident anticipation, 9—12.

Inscription. *Shushan-eduth*] Literally, "the lily of testimony." See note on xlv.

Aram-naharaim] Syria of the two rivers, *i. e.* Mesopotamia; this region is not mentioned in 2 S. viii., but it was either subject to the king of Zobah, or in close alliance with him. This and other points prove the complete independence of the inscription, which cannot have been taken from our books, nor from the psalm itself, which omits all mention of Aram. The situation of Zobah is uncertain; it probably extended over the greater part of the region between the Euphrates and Orontes.

when Joab returned] The psalm appears to have been written just when David was setting out on the expedition. Joab's victory over the Edomites is not mentioned in the historical books, where we read only of a defeat of the Syrians in the Valley of Salt. It is probable that instead of *Aram*, Syria, the reading in Sam. l.c. should be Edom. We have, however, no data which can enable us to reconcile accounts which may refer to different events, or to circumstances unnoticed by the historian.

the valley of salt] The barren district about 8 miles broad to the south of the Dead Sea.

1. *cast us off*] See Ps. xliv. 9. The expression denotes at the least a severe check, if not defeat, of the main army.

scattered us] Or, **broken us**; the word does not necessarily denote a complete rout of the army, but a break of the line; the army may have been broken into two or more divisions. See however 2 S. v. 20; Judg. xxi. 15.

hast been displeased] The statement implies a consciousness of some great fault in the people or the king.

2. *the earth*] Or, "the land." David is speaking of his country, broken and con-

hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.

5 [c]That thy beloved may be delivered; save *with* thy right hand, and hear me.

[c] Ps. 108. 6, &c.

6 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead *is* mine, and Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; Judah *is* my lawgiver;

8 Moab *is* my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, [1]triumph thou because of me.

[1] Or, *triumph thou over me* by an irony.

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vulsed as by an earthquake. The prayer, however, is full of hope.

it shaketh] This word is specially used of convulsions of an earthquake, and it occurs frequently in Davidic psalms.

3. *hard things*] Lit. "a hard thing," "severity."

wine of astonishment] A common and terrible figure in the prophetical books. See Isai. li. 17, 22, where A. V. has "trembling;" Jer. xxv. 15.

4. The strain changes: the rout had not been complete (see note on *v.* 1): the army, though broken, could be rallied, and the Psalmist points to the banner yet waving in the name of the God of Hosts (Jehovah Nissi, see Ex. xvii. 15); around which all true-hearted Israelites would rally, and contend again for the true and righteous cause. Cf. Isai. v. 26, xi. 12, xiii. 2.

that it may be displayed because of the truth] This rendering of a difficult and contested phrase is accepted by some critics, but the meaning may be that they may rally around it out of reach of the archers. See Note below.

5. *That thy beloved*] Or, That thy beloved ones, the fearers of the Lord, as they are called in the preceding verse. Thus the first part of the psalm closes, as usual, with a full strain of hope. No warrior ever understood his people better than David, whose impressionable heart felt the shock of all their emotions, but never failed to settle on the rock.

6. *God hath spoken*] This introduces another subject. David had doubtless consulted his God after the reverse, and now gives either the substance and purport, or the very words of the answer, however it may have been communicated. It consists of two parts, first, an assurance of unshaken possession of the whole Israelitish territory, secondly, of dominion over the neighbouring kingdoms, now in a state of revolt and hostility. This entire passage is repeated in Ps. cviii. 6—13.

in his holiness] Or, as in Ps. lxxxix. 35, "by His holiness;" cf. Amos iv. 2. The word may however be rendered (as by the LXX., Vulg.) "in His sanctuary," sc. from the mercy-seat, whence the oracle went forth.

I will rejoice] The rejoicing of God implies the withdrawal of His anger: punishment is "His strange work:" His joy is in the welfare of His people. The words, however, pass by a rapid transition to David: they express his feelings under the influence of the divine oracle.

I will divide] Or, "portion out," *i. e.* rule as king and judge with uncontested authority. Shechem and Succoth represent the central region of Israel: they, as the king now feels, are unendangered. The valley of Succoth is probably a district on the east of the Jordan; but there is difficulty in identifying the site.

7. *Gilead*] On the east of the Jordan. This promise secures David in the possession of the whole trans-Jordanic region: Manasseh and Ephraim complete the promise, which could not be claimed by any of his descendants after Solomon.

Judah is my lawgiver] The reference to Gen. xlix. 10 is unquestionable. (See also Num. xxi. 18.) It leaves no doubt as to the date. In David's reign, and in that of his son, and *then only*, could it be said that the sceptre pertained to Judah, but that Ephraim was the strength of his head.

8. *Moab is my washpot*] A sarcasm which has peculiar point applied to a nation remarkable for arrogance (cf. Isai. xvi. 6), and just then reduced to utter subjugation. The same figure is found in Herodotus, II. 172. David was connected with Moab by his descent from Ruth, and in early life had been on terms of confidential friendship with its king (see 1 S. xxii. 3, 4); but owing to some unrecorded transaction, possibly connected with treatment of his parents, his feelings were changed to extreme bitterness. See 2 S. viii. 2.

cast out my shoe] There is an evident connection between this metaphor and that in the preceding verse. The king regards Moab as a vessel fit only for the meanest uses—he casts the shoe, which he takes off in order to wash his feet, to Edom as a mere slave, cf. 2 S. viii. 14. There is no sufficient authority for the conjecture, though in itself not improbable, that casting a shoe may have been a symbolical form of taking possession of a disputed district.

triumph thou because of me] Or, "unto me, O Philistia, shout loudly." This appears

9 Who will bring me *into* the †strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

† Heb. *city of strength?*

10 *Wilt* not thou, O God, *which* [d]hadst cast us off? and *thou*, O God, *which* didst not go out with our armies?

[d] Ps. 44. 9. & 108. 11.

11 Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the †help of man.

† Heb. *salvation.*

12 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

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to be a call to Philistia to join the king's army. It must come with loud demonstrations of loyalty, whether dictated by admiration or extorted by fear. The former supposition is probable: the Cherethites and Pelethites, David's body-guard, are supposed to have consisted in part of men of Philistine descent: see also the account of the Gittites and their captain Ittai, in 2 S. xv. 18. See, however, critical Note. The true rendering may be in accordance with Ps. cviii. 9, "over Philistia is my triumphing."

9. *Who will bring me*] The common Hebrew idiom to express an earnest longing or confident hope; equivalent to "O that He would lead me," &c. Classical writers use the same form, *e.g.* "Quis me gelidis in montibus Hæmi sistat?"

strong city] Or, "fortified city," whether Petra (cf. 2 K. xiv. 7), as Delitzsch and Hengstenberg suppose, or Rabbath Ammon, which shortly after this time was captured by David, is uncertain: the mention of Edom agrees better with the former view.

who will lead me] Lit. "who hath led me," a change of tense which presents some difficulty, but the true meaning is probably expressed in the text.

10. *Wilt not thou, O God*] A loving expostulation; the anger, he doubts not, is past. God, who had apparently withdrawn His presence, will now grant all the desire of His servant.

12. *do valiantly*] Cf. Num. xxiv. 18; Ps. cxviii. 15, 16.

tread down] Ps. xliv. 5; Isai. lxiii. 3.

NOTES on PSALM LX. 4, 8.

4. The difficulty is in the last words; the preceding words are clear, "The Lord sets up a standard for those who fear Him;" but the meaning of להתנוסס and מפני קשט is questioned. The former may be rendered, "that it may be raised," or displayed, as in A. V.; or, more probably, "that they may flee to it, and be gathered around it;" the latter means either "because of truth" [as A. V. following the Targum; Aq. ἀπὸ προσώπου βεβαιότητος: thus, too, Dr Kay, Delitzsch, and the Bishop of Lincoln, who claims (evidently by oversight) the old Vv.]. On the other hand LXX., Vulg., Jerome, Arab., Æthiop., Copt., Syr., Sym. render "from the bow;" a good sense, "out of reach of the archers." Thus Ges., Hupf., Hitz. (2nd ed.). If this be accepted קשט = קשת, either as a lapsus calami, or as a dialectic variety, following the Syriac and Chaldee; thus Ges. and Hitzig.

8. Instead of התרועעי the text of Ps. cviii. 9 has אתרועע, *i.e.* I will triumph over Philistia. The meaning is thus much simpler, if not more appropriate, but the change seems to have been made to clear up a difficulty. The text in this psalm may, however, be retained with the same meaning if התרועעי be taken as the infinitive with suffix, "my triumphing is over Philistia." Thus Hupfeld. The LXX., Aq., Theod. derived the verb from רעה, ὑπετάγησαν, ἠταιρήσατο, ἐφιλίασαν.

PSALM LXI.

1 *David fleeth to God upon his former experience.* 4 *He voweth perpetual service unto him, because of his promises.*

To the chief Musician upon Neginah, *A Psalm* of David.

HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock *that* is higher than I.

PSALM LXI.

This appears to have been composed when David was driven from Jerusalem by Absalom. The notice of the tabernacle in *v.* 4, and the prayer for the king in *v.* 6, are incompatible with the period of his persecution by Saul.

This psalm was sung at daily matins in the earliest ages of the Church; see 'Const. Apost.' II. c. 59, ed. Coteler; thus, too, Athanasius and other Fathers.

upon Neginah] See inscription on Ps. iv. The meaning is doubtful, probably a tune adapted to a stringed instrument. In Job xxx. 9, A. V. has "song."

2. *From the end of the earth*] *i. e.* the

3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, *and* a strong tower from the enemy.

4 I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will [1]trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

5 For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* the heritage of those that fear thy name.

6 [†]Thou wilt prolong the king's life: *and* his years [†]as many generations.

7 He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, *which* may preserve him.

8 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

[1] Or, *make my refuge.*
† Heb. *Thou shalt add days to the days of the king.*
† Heb. *as generation and generation.*

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uttermost limits of the land beyond the Jordan: such an expression is natural to the king at a distance from the sanctuary and capital of Palestine.

is overwhelmed] Or, **fainteth.** In Isai. lvii. 16, A. V. has "fail." See Ps. lxxvii. 3. Pr. B. "is in heaviness," a good rendering.

lead me] Or, "Thou wilt lead me," an expression of perfect trust grounded upon past mercies described in the following verse.

the rock that is higher than I] *i. e.* a place of perfect security, which is too high for me to climb unaided. David has doubtless in mind the mount of Zion which he had once taken by assault, but which is now occupied by his foes.

4. *thy tabernacle*] The heavenly home represented by the earthly tabernacle from which the king was banished; cf. Ps. xv. 1. This proves that the psalm was not written in a later reign, when the word "temple" not "tabernacle" would have been used.

for ever] Lit. "ages," equivalent to "eternity." The prayer involves a sure faith in a future state of blessedness.

I will trust in the covert] Or, **Let me find shelter in the covert of Thy wings.** The Psalmist refers to the outspread wings of the cherubim on the Mercy-seat. The tabernacle was a figure of the heavenly sanctuary, the cherubim represented the protecting love of the heavenly King, and were the recognized symbols of His presence.

5. *the heritage*] Not merely the temporal heritage, of which David for a season was deprived, but the everlasting heritage described in the preceding verse.

6. *Thou wilt prolong*] Literally, Thou wilt add days to the days of the King, *i.e.* not merely prolong His life, but add to His natural life another life, even an eternal one. That David speaks of the Messiah, the ideal King of Whom he felt himself to be a type and representation, seems quite clear. The Targum, in accordance with all early Hebrew tradition, refers it to King Messiah: and in fact the words in this and the following verse are too express and definite to be accounted for by the usual assumption of hyperbole or poetic exaggeration.

as many generations] Or, **as generation and generation**, an expression always tantamount to an indefinite if not infinite duration.

7. *He shall abide*] Literally, "He shall sit," *i.e.* on His throne. The words are too clear to be explained away. The King to whom the Psalmist refers will have an everlasting dominion.

prepare] Or, "appoint that mercy and truth may preserve Him." See Note below.

8. *for ever*] One more proof of David's belief, not merely in the continuance, but eternity, of personal consciousness.

NOTE on PSALM LXI. 7.

The LXX., Vulg., Syr. and Arab. render מַן "Who?" But there is no authority for this usage in Hebrew; see note on Exod. xvi. 15. The Targum has מִן מרי עלמא, "from the Lord of the world;" which may perhaps indicate a various reading. The rendering of the A. V. is generally adopted by modern critics, who take מַן to be an apoc. imper. of מנה, *i.e.* grant or appoint.

PSALM LXII.

1 *David professing his confidence in God discourageth his enemies.* 5 *In the same confidence he encourageth the godly.* 9 *No trust is to be put in worldly things.* 11 *Power and mercy belong to God.*

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.

[1]TRULY my soul [†]waiteth upon God: from him *cometh* my salvation.

2 He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *he is* my [†]defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

3 How long will ye imagine mis-

[1] Or, *Only.*
† Heb. *is silent.*
† Heb. *high place.*

chief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall *shall ye be*, *and as* a tottering fence.

4 They only consult to cast *him* down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse †inwardly. Selah.

† Heb. *in their inward parts.*

5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation *is* from him.

6 He only *is* my rock and my salvation: *he is* my defence; I shall not be moved.

7 In God *is* my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God.

8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah.

9 Surely men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* men of high degree *are* a lie: to be laid in the balance, they *are* ¹altogether *lighter* than vanity.

¹ Or, *alike.*

PSALM LXII.

This bears a close resemblance in style and structure to the 39th, and was undoubtedly written by the same author. The earnestness of thought, the depth and force of religious feeling, no less than the vigour and sublimity of the language, leave no room for doubting the correctness of the inscription, which attributes it to David. The date of the composition is uncertain. It is more cheerful and hopeful than the psalms written about the time of Absalom's revolt, though some expressions may seem to refer to the outburst of an insurrection.

Jedutbun] See Ps. xxxix.

1. *Truly*] Or, "only." The Hebrew word is difficult to translate; it occurs six times in this psalm as an affirmative particle adding force to the assertion and excluding all contradiction. It may be expressed by the words "surely," "verily," or "only," but it is better, when possible, to keep one word, bearing in mind that it does not adequately convey the force of the original. In Ps. xxxix. the word occurs four times.

waiteth] Or, "my soul is silently waiting unto God," *i.e.* turned towards Him in speechless expectation, with unutterable yearning; see Ps. xxxiii. 20.

2. *greatly moved*] Ps. x. 6, where see note.

3. *imagine mischief*] The Hebrew word, which occurs in no other passage, is obscure, but it probably means "assault," "rush with violence." (Targ. and Syr. tumultuamini, or fremitis, LXX. ἐπιτίθεσθε, Vulg. irruitis, Jerome, insidiamini.) The etymology is quite uncertain. It seems to imply the outburst of an insurrection.

ye shall be slain all of you] There is some difficulty in this passage. Our version follows a traditional reading which is probably incorrect. The meaning of the original appears to be, "*How long* will ye all of you *unite to* crush a man like a bowing wall, a tottering hedge?" As though David were in such state that a violent blow would cause his destruction. The imprecation (though supported by many similar passages and justified by the king's position as the representative of God's justice) is out of place in this part of the psalm, which, moreover, throughout is singularly noble and calm in its utterances. Our version follows the Hebrew tradition of the west, adopted by the Targ. and by some of the ancient interpreters. That which is given in this note is supported by another school of Rabbis, by nearly all ancient versions (LXX. φονεύετε, Vulg., Jer.), and by the generality of modern critics.

4. *from his excellency*] The word denotes high rank, supreme dignity, and is more appropriate to a king, than to a persecuted prophet. Cf. Job xiii. 11.

with their mouth] Lit. "They bless with his mouth." The Psalmist, as in numerous instances, individualizes his opponents, selecting one as the ringleader. The expression points to the arch-traitor, Ahithophel. Cf. Ps. v. 6, 9.

5. *wait*] Or, **be silent**, as above. The Psalmist exhorts his soul to retain the feeling of absolute resignation, which he had expressed in the opening verse.

6. *be moved*] Cf. Ps. xviii. 1, and note the increase of David's confidence; in *v.* 2 he says, "I shall not be *greatly* moved."

7. *In God*] Or, **On God** *rests* **my salvation and my glory.**

8. *ye people*] It is observable that the king does not say "my people:" but this can scarcely be accounted for by their revolt, as Delitzsch supposes. The people whom he addresses are his own adherents (cf. Judg. iii. 18; 1 K. xix. 21), who need exhortation and comfort, and are in a fit state to pour out their hearts in prayer.

9. *men of low degree*] As in Ps. xlix. 2, the Psalmist uses two words for "man," the first equivalent to (homo) a common man, the other to (vir, ἀνήρ) a man distinguished by personal or adventitious advantages.

a lie] These counterfeits, assuming a power which is not theirs. David looks calmly at all

10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them.*

11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that [1] power *belongeth* unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O Lord, *belongeth* mercy: for [a] thou renderest to every man according to his work.

Rev. 22. 12.

PSALM LXIII.

1 *David's thirst for God.* 4 *His manner of blessing God.* 9 *His confidence of his enemies' destruction, and his own safety.*

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O GOD, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth foi thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and [†] thirsty land, [†] where no water is;

[†] Heb. *weary.* [†] Heb. *without water.*

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his enemies, the mass as a mere mob, their leaders but empty boasters.

to be laid in the balance] Or, **in the scales they go up, they are altogether** *lighter* **than mere breath.** Thus Hupf., Ew., Hitz. Dr Kay renders "they belong altogether to vanity."

10. *in oppression*] This points at the tyranny of the nobles, among whom Absalom may have found his chief supporters. See Ps. lviii. 2.

become not vain in robbery] *i.e.* trust not vainly in rapine. A trait of the times: in this and many similar passages, as Prov. i. 10—14 (where see note), we have traces of a wanton insolent spirit of brigandage among the nobles, like that of the Norman barons, and of the French noblesse in the 16th century. The word "vanity" refers to the preceding verse, where the same word is used in the Hebrew. It denotes in both cases empty inflation. "A breath may make them as a breath has made."

11. *God hath spoken once*] Compare Job xxxiii. 14, and xl. 5. The Psalmist speaks of an inward revelation to his conscience. God speaks by the manifestation of Himself; man listens, and hears the two great lessons of divine power, and divine justice, shewn in mercy and perfect retribution.

12. *mercy*] Or, "grace." The reward, though exactly proportioned to man's deserts, is a free gift, and comes from God's grace. The desert implies fitness, but does not constitute a claim upon Him, from Whom comes both the will and power to act.

PSALM LXIII.

The indications of time, place and circumstances in this psalm are distinct; it was written when the Psalmist was followed by enemies seeking after his life (9), in a dry and thirsty land without water (1), after a night passed in devout meditation (6); it expresses feelings of intense longing after God, not less intense than when the Psalmist had previously worshipped in the sanctuary (2), feelings moreover of unshaken hope filling the soul with joy (5), leading to an assured conviction of the overthrow and ruin of his enemies, and their chief (9, 10), and of the complete deliverance of the king (11), evidently the composer of this psalm, unsurpassed for devout and earnest sentiment. The style is somewhat obscure in passages, but singularly animated and graphic. All these points are in accordance with the inscription, which attributes the psalm to David; supposing it to have been composed on the morning after the flight from Jerusalem, when "the king, and all that were with him, came weary" and took up their first night-quarters; 2 S. xvi. 14.

the wilderness] The wilderness of Judah is a term more specially applied to the district on the west of the Dead Sea, but in this passage, as in the New Testament, Matt. iii. 1, it is understood to include the country, for the most part barren and dry, between Jerusalem and Jericho (thus Dathe, Rosen., Hengst., Delitzsch, &c.): David passed two days in it in a state of great weariness and exhaustion; a fact well appreciated by Ahithophel, who said "I will come upon him while he is weary and weakhanded," 2 S. xvii. 2, and by those who received the king after crossing the Jordan, "for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness." 2 S. xvii. 29.

1. *thou art my God*] David uses the name El, which expresses the might of God, in which in all his weakness (see above) he retains unbroken trust.

early will I seek thee] The expression is used idiomatically in many passages to denote earnest seeking, see note on Job vii. 21; here it probably is taken literally, denoting the prayer offered at the first burst of dawn, when the king awoke "refreshed;" cf. *vv.* 5—7; 2 S. xvi. 14.

my soul thirsteth for thee] See Ps. xlii. 2. The expression is metaphorical, but, as in that beautiful psalm, in harmony with the special circumstances.

longeth] The Hebrew word occurs in no other passage; it seems to denote exhaustion and longing. In Arabic, the only cognate dialect in which the root is found, it has the meaning of "blindness."

thirsty land] Lit. as in the marg. "weary," an epithet peculiarly applicable to the desert, see Isai. xxxii. 2. The word, as has been pointed out above, is used twice to describe

2 To see thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

3 Because thy lovingkindness *is* better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.

5 My soul shall be satisfied as *with* †marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful lips:

† Heb. *fatness.*

6 When I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night* watches.

7 Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

8 My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.

9 But those *that* seek my soul, to destroy *it*, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

10 †They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.

† Heb. *They shall make him run out* like water *by the hands of the sword.*

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the sufferings of David and his people in the first two days of his flight. The Psalmist undoubtedly suggests a comparison between the thirsty land and his own longing heart, but the imagery is strictly local. The expression is repeated in Ps. cxliii. 6.

2. *To see ... the sanctuary*] The A.V. transposes the two clauses, thus obscuring the connection of thought. The Hebrew has **Thus have I contemplated Thee in the sanctuary, to behold Thy strength and Thy glory**. The meaning appears to be, The devout feelings which now possess me are the same as those with which I was animated when I worshipped in the sanctuary, and realized the strength and glory symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant. It will be remembered that David had sent back the Ark into the city, saying, "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord He will bring me again, and shew me both it, and His habitation." 2 S. xv. 25. That thought naturally presented itself to his mind when he awoke, and compared his former and present state of feeling. The two words "strength" and "glory," as Dr Kay observes, are associated with the Ark of the Covenant, *e.g.* in 1 S. iv. 21; Ps. lxxviii. 61.

3. *is better than life*] David's life was in great peril, but the loving favour was secure; such a feeling is inseparable from a faith in a future state; see Ps. xvi. 8—10.

4. *Thus will I bless thee*] The same word with which the second verse properly begins, "thus," *i.e.* as I adored Thee in the sanctuary, and as I seek Thee now, *v.* 1, even so will I bless Thee throughout my life, which is only precious (see the preceding verse) so far as it has the lovingkindness of God shining upon it.

5. *as with marrow and fatness*] So speaks the king, "hungry and weary," in deepest suffering, yet inwardly full of joy; cf. Rom. viii. 35—37. See also Ps. xxxvi. 8.

6. *upon my bed*] David frequently speaks of night as the season for devout meditation, see Ps. iv. 4, and note on xvi. 7. In this passage there is evidently a direct reference to that first long night of peril and watchfulness. In the night-watches, "per singulas vigilias" (Jerome), David turned to God in prayer, and received the support of which he speaks in the next verse.

7. *Because thou hast been*] A reference both to past deliverances, and to the inward assurance granted in answer to prayer.

in the shadow of thy wings] The Ark with the Mercy-seat overshadowed by the cherubic wings was absent (see note on *v.* 2), but the power which they represented was present, full of comfort and help. Cf. Ps. xvii. 8.

8. *My soul followeth hard*, &c.] The first clause describes the cleaving of the soul to God, the second God's stedfast support of it; a reciprocal action, and reaction: prevenient grace first draws out the spiritual affection, then follows the assurance of support. Delitzsch observes truly that to understand this psalm the reader must follow it in prayer, quoting Bernard, "sermo amantis barbarus est non amanti."

9. *to destroy it*] See 2 S. xvii. 1—3. The words "to destroy it" may, however, be rendered "to their own destruction" (thus Hupfeld), a word exactly and immediately fulfilled in the case of Ahithophel, 2 S. xvii. 23.

the lower parts of the earth] *i.e.* to the grave, or to Sheol; cf. Ps. lxxxvi. 13.

10. *They shall fall by the sword*, &c.] Both clauses of this verse have a special significance; the first means "they shall shed him (*i.e.* shed his blood) like water by means of the sword." It points to an individual who is to perish by a violent death, inflicted by an instrumentality not distinctly specified: thus Ahithophel perished by his own hand, thus Absalom died pierced through the heart by three darts as he hung living in the tree, 2 S. xviii. 14. The second clause speaks of the fate of the rebels; they should be a portion for foxes, or jackals; at once a thought

11 But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

PSALM LXIV.

1 *David prayeth for deliverance, complaining of his enemies.* 7 *He promiseth himself to see such an evident destruction of his enemies, as the righteous shall rejoice at it.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

HEAR my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

3 [a] Who whet their tongue like a sword, *and* bend *their bows to shoot* their arrows, *even* bitter words:

4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

5 They encourage themselves *in* an evil [1] matter: they commune [†] of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

6 They search out iniquities; [1] they accomplish [†] a diligent search: both the

[a] Ps. 11. 2.
[1] Or, *speech.*
[†] Heb. *to hide snares.*
[1] Or, *we are consumed by that which they have thoroughly searched.*
[†] Heb *a search searched.*

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in accordance with the scene in the howling wilderness, and a prediction exactly fulfilled, see 2 S. xviii. 8.

11. *But the king*] David elsewhere speaks thus of himself, Ps. lxi. 6; here with peculiar propriety, as realizing his restoration to kingly estate, after the ruin of his enemies.

sweareth by him] From Deut. vi. 13, it is clear that this expression refers to recognition of God, not as some (Hengst.) interpret it, to swearing by the king's name, as Joseph, "by the life of Pharaoh," Gen. xlii. 15, and Hannah, "as thy soul liveth," 1 S. i. 26. No such phrase is ever used of David.

that speak lies] The special guilt of David's accusers; see notes on Pss. xxxviii. 12, xli. 5—8.

Psalm LXIV.

This bears a close resemblance to many psalms which are ascribed to David, especially the seventh; nor is there any reason to question the statement in the inscription. The style is vigorous and animated, somewhat abrupt, and replete with archaisms found only in psalms of an early date. It contains a description of treacherous enemies, especially of slanderers, and though the occasion cannot be precisely determined, it belongs probably to the time when David first had reason to suspect the existence of the formidable conspiracy which drove him from Jerusalem.

Two strophes, each of four verses, are separated by one of two verses, 5, 6.

1. *in my prayer*] Or, "meditation." Cf. Ps. lv. 1, 2.

2 This points distinctly to two forms of danger, the secret conspiracy of which the king suspected the existence, and open outbursts of disaffection. "Insurrection" expresses the true sense of the Hebrew, which means a noisy tumultuous crowd. Jerome "a tumultu:" cf. Ps. lxii. 3. The same word is used Ps. ii. 1, "Why do the heathen *rage?*"

3. *their tongue*] All the psalms of this period dwell much on the slanders of David's enemies. They were in fact the immediate cause of his overthrow: see 2 S. xv. 2—6, and note on *v.* 5.

bend] The word properly applies to the bow, hence the paraphrastic version in the text. It would be simpler to translate the word "direct" or "aim." Thus also Ps. lviii. 7. The expression is probably chosen to denote the deliberate malignity with which the slanderer prepares his calumnies.

5. The first clause should be rendered **They strengthen for themselves an evil word.** The "evil word" is commonly regarded as equivalent to evil thing, or matter, but it evidently refers to the slander on which the hopes of the conspirators rest, and which they take care to strengthen. See the account of Absalom's proceeding, 2 S. xv. 3, 4. The charge of neglecting the administration of justice would perhaps tell even more forcibly upon the popular mind than David's great crime, which touched directly but a single family. See note on Ps. lviii. 1.

they commune] Literally, "tell," "narrate;" they talk over every detail of their scheme.

laying snares privily] Or, "to conceal their snares." One object of their discussions was to secure perfect secrecy.

Who shall see them?] Compare Ps. lix. 7. Godlessness is always represented as a special characteristic of David's enemies. He felt, and they felt, that, whatever his personal faults might be, he represented the cause of righteousness and true religion.

6. *They search out*] This verse presents difficulties of construction, but the general meaning is clear. It may be rendered **They devise iniquities,** (they say) **we have completed a well-devised device; and the inward** (thought) **of a man and his heart is deep.** The Psalmist hears them exulting in the secrecy of their plans, in the depth and subtlety of their thoughts. The

inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart, *is* deep.

7 But God shall shoot at them *with* an arrow; suddenly † shall they be wounded.

† Heb. *their wound shall be.*

8 So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.

9 And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

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last clause may be taken as a reflection of the Psalmist, but it has a peculiar force as expressing criminal exultation in the success of hypocrisy. The word "a man" points at an individual, most probably Ahithophel, to whom depth of thought and unfathomable malignity are peculiarly appropriate.

7. *But God shall shoot*] While they are bending their bow, adjusting their arrows, and taking deliberate aim, the shafts of God pierce them. The rapid transition of thought and vivid imagery are thoroughly Davidic. If the punctuation be retained we must render "And God shooteth at them an arrow suddenly, their wounds are there," *i.e.* they are already wounded, the wounds are instantaneous.

8. *So they shall make*, &c.] This version follows Kimchi, but presents an incongruous image. The Hebrew runs thus literally, "And they shall cause him to stumble; against them is their own tongue; they will shake their heads at each other, every one triumphing over them" (see Note below). Each clause has a distinct bearing upon the facts recorded in 2 S. xvii. 1—14. "They shall cause him to stumble," thus "Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." "Their own tongue was against them," "for the Lord had appointed to *defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel*, to the intent that he might bring evil upon Absalom"— "and when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed," &c., *v.* 23. "They will shake their heads at each other" (such is the literal meaning of the Hebrew), sc. all who hear of this conspiracy, even every one who sees his desire upon them.

9. *wisely consider*] Cf. Job xxxiv. 27.

11. *The righteous shall be glad*] Cf. Job xxii. 19; Ps. xxxii. 11.

NOTE on PSALM LXIV. 8.

Lit. "and they shall make him stumble." This may possibly bear Dr Kay's rendering, "and men hurled him down stumbling;" or if we take "him" as referring to Ahithophel, "they will overthrow him," or by a common idiom "he will be overthrown by them," sc. by his own accomplices. This was literally the case. Each word is taken in its literal and proper sense; יכשילהו, Hiph., "cause to stumble." יתנודדו, from נוד, "shake," used especially of shaking the head as a gesture of mourning, or contempt for a fallen enemy; see Job xvi. 4. ראה בם, a phrase specially characteristic of David, "seeing his desire upon them," looking down upon them with exultation; see Pss. xxii. 17, xxxvii. 34, liv. 7.

PSALM LXV.

1 *David praiseth God for his grace.* 4 *The blessedness of God's chosen by reason of benefits.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm *and* Song of David.

PRAISE † waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

† Heb. *is silent.*

2 O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

PSALM LXV.

For the probable date and author of the psalm, see below. A worshipper in God's courts, in his own name first, and then in that of his associates, describes (*v.* 1) the praise due to God in Zion, and the crowding of all men to His courts to worship. He bethinks him of his sins and the sins of his people, which God covers (*v.* 3); of the blessedness of those who have access to the source of pardon (*v.* 4); of the mighty deeds of Jehovah, always, in nature, and among the nations, by which His name is and will be known (*vv.* 5—8); and His special mercy celebrated in this hymn, of a prosperous harvest; of which the concluding verses contain a vivid painting (*vv.* 9—13).

1. *Praise waiteth*, &c.] If the punctuation of the received text be retained the marginal rendering is better. "Praise is silent, &c., or, (is given to Thee) in silence." Praise is fitly shewn to Thee by a holy silence (Note 1),

† Heb. *Words, or, Matters of iniquities.*

3 † Iniquities prevail against me: *as for* our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

4 Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.

5 *By* terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; *who art* the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off *upon* the sea:

6 Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; *being* girded with power:

7 Which stilleth the noise of the

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more expressive than words. See Ps. lxii. 1, marg. rendering, and *v.* 5; Hab. ii. 20; Zech. ii. 13. The silence intimated is unlike the sacred silence of the Greeks and Romans: it implies a soul filled with thoughts too big for utterance: these at last untie the tongue; and the psalm which follows is their expression.

and unto thee shall, &c.] Rather, "and (so) a vow to Thee is (rightly) performed."

2. *O thou that hearest*, &c.] The action seems present. "Unto Thee all flesh comes, to worship, and to pray to Him that heareth." Calvin remarks "that God can no more divest Himself of His attribute of hearing prayer than of being." The address to Him by this title contrasts Him with idols who hear not; Pss. cxv. 4—7, cxxxv. 16, 17, &c. The expression "*all flesh*" should not be strained to mean "all men," and much less "all creatures," as some (Hengsten., Hupfeld, etc.) interpret: it is a general expression (see Pss. lvi. 4, cxlv. 21), descriptive of a multitude of all sexes, ages, and conditions, that crowd to God's courts, in fact, and perhaps in sight of the Psalmist, and pray, and have an answer.

3. *Iniquities prevail against me*, &c.] The worshipper, when voice is given him, confesses the multitude of his sins, rising up to remembrance—and their pardon! "Iniquities have prevailed against me or mastered me: our transgressions, Thou dost cover them." The pronoun is emphatic—Jehovah alone thus pardons. The absence of the parallelism too is emphatic. We expect "our transgressions (Ps. xl. 12) are more in number than the hairs of our head;" but instead of this we have the assurance of pardon. The literal rendering of the original is (marg.) "*words* or *matters* of iniquities," in which the expressions in italics are not, perhaps, pleonastic, but suggest a long roll of sins, and many circumstances of them, which crowd the memory of the Psalmist (Pss. cv. 27, cxlv. 5, marg.). Note the change of number: the Psalmist first speaks of his own sins, then of the pardon, of them, and also, of the sins of all his associates. Note, too, the expression that "God covers sin out of sight," which is the import of the original rather than that He "*purges it away.*"

4. *Blessed*, &c.] The words still of the suppliant, "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and dost bring nigh unto Thee to abide in Thy courts: we, who have this privilege, shall be full, or **are full** of the blessings of Thine house, of Thy holy sanctuary." The temple or sanctuary of God is described as His house, in which, as a princely host, He receives His chosen and bestows upon them all good (Pss. xxiii. 5, 6, xxvii. 4).

5. *By terrible things*, &c.] "By fearful *righteous* judgments dost Thou (rather than wilt Thou) *answer us*, *i. e.* hear and reply to us," &c. Deut. x. 21, 2 S. vii. 23, illustrate the fearful judgments done in times past for the chosen people, and now again to be done in the hour of need. *Righteous* as done against His enemies.

the confidence (or hope) [art Thou] *of all the ends of the earth*, &c., or "of all that are in the earth, every where, and of all in distant islands of the sea;" Hebr. "sea of distant ones," see Isai. lxvi. 19. The words do not express that all men in the earth and in the isles do, or will one day, hope in God; but simply that God is their Hope for a blessing or a curse, whether they know Him and feel for Him, or simply live by and through Him.

6. *Which by his strength*, &c.] "He in the beginning set fast upon their foundations, and now sustains, the mountains; girt He is (Ps. xviii. 32, also Ps. xciii. 1) with might, as a warrior with armour of proof." Notice the transition, from the address to God, to a description of His majesty and creative power: a similar transition occurs Ps. xciii. 1, 2 above quoted: it suggests to some commentators that the two verses 6, 7 are chanted by a chorus, which responds to the people, who recite the other parts. Note, too, that the subject of these two verses, though connected with the general purpose of the psalm, touches upon a different theme.

7. *Which stilleth*, &c.] "Which stills the raging seas, their raging waves, and the people's madness." The raging waves suggest the raging of a people in popular tumult: or a popular tumult, miraculously allayed, may have been an occasion of the psalm. The original resembles Isai. xvii. 12—14: if writ-

seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.

8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening [1] to rejoice.

9 Thou visitest the earth, and [1] waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, *which* is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: [1] thou settlest the furrows thereof: [†] thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

11 Thou crownest [†] the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

12 They drop *upon* the pastures of

[1] Or, *to sing.*
[1] Or, *after thou hadst made it to desire rain.*
[1] Or, *thou causest rain to descend into the furrows thereof.*
[†] Heb. *thou dissolvest it.*
[†] Heb. *the year of thy goodness.*

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ten as some think in the time of Hezekiah, it may be an imitation of it.

8. *thy tokens*] *i.e.* signs of God's presence; miracles of mercy and judgment, such as were hinted at before, *v.* 5; or allusion may be made to some miracle of deliverance now unknown. *The outgoings of morning* are the east, from which morning is poetically said to go forth (Note 3). Note the sentiment! God's tokens fill the world with alarm; but His mercies (these are intended) fill east and west with songs of joy!

9. *Thou visitest*, &c.] This verse seems to come at last to the point aimed at from the first, the plenteousness of earth through the visits (Jer. xxvii. 22) of God. "Thou visitest (or, hast visited) the earth, and waterest it, and makest it rich abundantly. The river of God is full of water! Thou preparest corn for man, for it is Thou that so (*i.e.* abundantly) preparest it (the earth) for its nurture." As rain is mentioned (*v.* 10), it may be that instead of the rendering *waterest it* we should render "makest it plenteous," or "blessest it," as the Prayer-Book Version has it: then the words "Thou makest it rich abundantly," which follow, are simply an amplification. Probably the expression "the river of God," &c., begins a new sentence as above (Note 4). Is "the rain" intended by the *river of God*, or "stores of rain treasured up in the clouds"? or, is the sentence an exclamation in sight of a well-watered land, &c.? "God's stream is full of water!" The following *v.* (10) gives, it would seem, an example of such an exclamation in sight of a land cultivated and ready for God's blessing. It is hard to decide between the above interpretations of "the river of God." The Arabs call rain "the river of God," says Schultens, quoted by Perowne, Vol. I. p. 485, 2nd ed.; but the expression is not natural, and none similar to it occurs in Scripture.—The general idea is manifest: God alone gives abundance, fills the rivers with water, and covers the land with corn, though man's labour seems to do something. In the original there is an alliteration which the translation cannot imitate.

10. *Thou waterest the ridges*, &c.] In the original the tenses in the first versicle seem to be imperative. "Water its ridges—lower its furrows—Thou softenest it with showers—Thou blessest the increase of it." So the LXX., Vulg., &c., and many moderns. A somewhat similar transition, from the imperative to the indicative, occurs Ps. lxxii. 1, 2. Nothing can more vividly paint the land waiting for God's blessing of rain than this sudden exclamation. All is done that man may do—the furrows are cut deep—the ridges stand straight—the seed is sown: "Now, O God, send the needful showers, and bless the increase!" This address would be most appropriate in the spring: and Tholuck suggests the spring as the time at which the psalm was written; but the conclusion, *v.* 13, is more suited to the time of harvest: and then *vv.* 9, 10, &c., describe the preparations for it.

11. *Thou crownest*, &c.] Lit. (as in the margin) "Thou hast crowned (*i.e.* with plenty) a year of Thy goodness (*i.e.* a year of mercies); and Thy paths (Hebr. tracks of chariot-wheels: compare Ps. xviii. 10, Deut. xxxiii. 26, &c.) drop fatness!" The word (עִטַּרְתָּ) *Thou crownest* is commonly followed by the accusative of the noun indicating the blessing dispensed (Ps. ciii. 4), in this case, "plenty." Mark the image of the next versicle: "Fullness and abundance follow in Thy train, and drop from Thy paths (see below, *v.* 12) whithersoever Thou goest, visiting the earth." Rosenm. compares Virg. 'Georg.' II. 392: peace and plenty follow the look of the image of the god of plenty: a pleasing fiction! Here the paths of the great Creator drop abundance, and His presence diffuses transports of joy: a truth impressed upon the mind of His chosen a thousand years before Virgil sang.

12. *They drop upon*, &c.] According to this rendering the meaning is that Jehovah's paths, like clouds (hence perhaps the P. B. V.), drop fatness upon scattered pastures in distant wildernesses (Job xxxviii. 26), and clothe with a garment of exultation the crowning tops of rising hills: but it is more consistent with the original to consider *the pastures of the wilderness*, *i.e.*

the wilderness: and the little hills [†]rejoice on every side.

13 The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

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patches of verdure in desolate wilderness, and *the little hills, i.e.* summits of verdant hills, described as spots visited by the Creator, and dropping fatness accordingly. This phrase *drop fatness* does not carry the idea of dropping abundance, like rain, from above: rather the idea of "abounding exceedingly" or "overflowing with plenty." So *v.* 12 contains two instances of Jehovah's paths in this sense dropping fatness. **The pastures of the wilderness drop: and the little hills are girded with joy.**

13. *The pastures*, &c.] "The pastures are *clothed* with flocks; the valleys so hidden with corn that they cannot be seen; they exult with joy; yea, they sing aloud." The article in the orig. is added to the word *flocks*, and seems to convey the idea that flocks are the fit decoration of pastures. The picture of hill and valley exulting in abundance would not be complete (some say) [Note 5] without the mention of man exulting and singing in the midst. But it is more in accordance with the spirit of Hebrew poetry (Isai. lv. 12; Jer. li. 48, &c.) to consider the valleys themselves and fields singing on account of the abundance of God's gifts: see too Virg. 'Georg.' IV. 461, &c.

Delitzsch, Perowne, &c., imagine this psalm to have been written upon the occasion of the Assyrian invasion (see Isai. xxxvii. 30); and interpret the inscription, "A Psalm and Song of David," as indicating the manner rather than the hand of David. But the expressions do not seem such as would have been chosen to describe deliverance by the miraculous destruction of the Assyrians. The subject seems, from *vv.* 9—13, to be a plentiful harvest, possibly (*vv.* 7 and 8) in a time of dangerous popular disturbance, or after miraculous deliverance from extreme peril. Whatever may have been the object of the psalm, it is remarkable, even among the psalms, for its realization of Jehovah's presence in nature and history, and for a love, trust, approach to Him, inexplicable, except upon the supposition of the truth of Jewish story. These characteristics, and also minute correspondences with Pss. lx. and lxii., generally esteemed Davidical (Hengst., &c.), suggest that David was the author: and the inscription, certainly, was not put in the front without cause. The mention of the temple in *v.* 4 seems an argument (but see Ps. lxviii. introd.) against the authorship of David. The mention of the *courts* of the temple has more weight, as the tabernacle had only one court. Also certain words and phrases remind us of psalms of the days of Hezekiah (*e.g.* Ps. xcvi.), and of Isaiah's later prophecies. Possibly the psalm may have received alterations in course of time; and been adapted to the temple-service from an original song of David.

NOTES on PSALM LXV.

1. Luther (in Delitzsch, I. 476), "O God! Thou art fitly praised in *the stillness of secret prayer*;" opposed, not so much to *the utterance of prayers with the lips*, as to *senseless verbiage*, and *the noisy bustle of worldlings*.

Some connect together the words "silence" and "praise," and render, "Silence-praise is Thine, O God, in Zion." The sense according to this arrangement is the same as that given, but the arrangement does not recommend itself by simplicity, nor by conformity with the style of Hebrew poetry. The version of the LXX. (σοὶ πρέπει ὕμνος), and Vulg. from which the Prayer-Book Version (Note 2) is derived, supposes a different punctuation of the word (דֻּמִיָּה) out of which the obscurity arises. Some critics (*e. g.* Ew., &c.) adopt this punctuation (*i.e.* דֹּמִיָּה), which however gives a common turn to the sentiment of *v.* 1.

2. The Prayer-Book Version adds "in Jerusalem" at the end of the verse.

3. By attraction, as it is called, the word may perhaps be applied to the evening; but the "outgoings of evening" is a phrase to which no parallel is found. The A.V. in some impressions puts a stop after "morning," and so avoids the incongruity. So, too, Zunz and others.

4. As in the Prayer-Book Version, which follows the LXX. and Vulg.: so too Kay, Zunz, Umbreit, Moll, &c.

5. Delitzsch; Ewald; Moll doubtfully;—"man shouts for joy: he sings."

PSALM LXVI.

1 *David exhorteth to praise God,* 5 *to observe his great works,* 8 *to bless him for his gracious benefits.* 12 *He voweth for himself religious service to God.* 16 *He declareth God's special goodness to himself.*

To the chief Musician, A Song *or* Psalm.

MAKE a joyful noise unto God, † all ye lands:

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

3 Say unto God, How terrible *art thou in* thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies ‖ † submit themselves unto thee.

4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing *to* thy name. Selah.

5 Come and see the works of God: *he is* terrible *in his* doing toward the children of men.

6 He turned the sea into dry *land:* they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

7 He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

9 Which † holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

† Heb. *all the earth.*

‖ Or, *yield feigned obedience.* † Heb. *lie.*

† Heb. *putteth.*

PSALM LXVI.

This and the following psalms have certain peculiarities which distinguish them from the preceding. They are not attributed to David; in the inscriptions they bear a double designation, equivalent to "hymn," "psalm," *i.e.* "a psalm of praise and joy:" the name Elohim is almost exclusively used, and they are evidently intended for public recitation in the temple. All these indications lead to the conclusion that they are compositions of one of the great Levitical families, to whom the temple-services were committed by David.

This psalm celebrates a great deliverance; it speaks of a season of severe trial and affliction; but although commentators are generally agreed that it is of later date than the reign of David, it is doubtful whether it belongs to the time of Hezekiah, or to the period following the restoration from the Babylonian captivity: of the two more probably to the former; for references to the long and bitter sufferings of the latter period are generally more specific; here the time of affliction would seem to have passed away speedily and completely. It may however have been composed in the reign of one of Hezekiah's predecessors. The expressions are applicable to many events recorded in the historical books, especially to some in the reigns of Asa and Jehoshaphat, and there is more of hopefulness and joy than generally breathes in the utterances of an age when the prophetic spirit felt the near approach of impending judgments.

The metres are regular, and distinctly marked by Selah, except at the close of *v.* 11, where it is not needed.

1. *all ye lands*] Or, "all the earth." The whole world is called upon to rejoice in the manifestation of God's righteousness, which must needs be for the permanent good of His creatures. There is however in this, and throughout the psalm (see especially *vv.* 4, 8), a clear reference to the Messianic hopes which lay deep in the heart of every true Israelite.

3. *submit themselves*] The word literally means "lie," *i. e.* yield feigned and reluctant obedience. See note on Ps. xviii. 44. Our Prayer-Book Version, "shall be found liars unto thee," expresses the sense more exactly.

6. *He turned the sea*] *i. e.* the Red Sea at the Exodus, and the Jordan at the entrance into Canaan; events which delivered Israel, established its dominion, and were pledges of its future permanence. Such allusions are especially numerous about the time of the Babylonish captivity, but are too common and natural a topic to determine the date of this psalm.

9. *holdeth*] Or, "setteth;" the word implies deliverance from a state of extreme peril.

to be moved] The state therefore was not one of utter ruin; these expressions point to a time when Israel, though afflicted and severely tried, still retained its national life and independence.

10. *tried us*] The Hebrew word denotes a fiery trial, as in a furnace. The metaphor is common in most languages. Cf. Pss. xii. 6, xvii. 3; Isai. xlviii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.

11. *the net*] This is probably the true meaning of the Hebrew word; which, however, may denote "a fortress or stronghold," in the special sense of a place of confinement. The Israelites are represented as animals caught in the hunter's snares, and then shut up in

12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a † wealthy *place*.

13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,

14 Which my lips have † uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

15 I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of † fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

16 Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

17 I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me:*

19 *But* verily God hath heard *me;* he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

20 Blessed *be* God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

PSALM LXVII.

1 *A prayer for the enlargement of God's kingdom,* 3 *to the joy of the people,* 6 *and the increase of God's blessings.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm *or* Song.

GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine † upon us; Selah.

† Heb. *with us.*

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a place of confinement: an expression applicable to more than one epoch in the national history. It is used specially of David's condition in exile under Saul, 1 S. xxii. 4, &c.

affliction] The word denotes heavy pressure, as of an overladen beast of burden. Cf. Ps. lv. 3, where it is rendered "oppression."

12. *ride over our heads*] Two metaphors are supposed to be combined, riding over the land, taking possession of the fortified places, and trampling on its strength; but it seems more natural to refer to the representations, very common on Egyptian monuments, of a conqueror driving his chariot over his prostrate foes.

but thou broughtest] The suddenness of this transition has many parallels in the psalms. It seems to indicate the speedy and complete dispersion of an invading force.

a wealthy place] Lit. "abundance." The defeat of the enemies appears to have been followed by a season of great abundance, as on the occasion celebrated in the preceding psalm. The old versions generally use a word which denotes "refreshment," and Hupf. would alter the reading, but without sufficient cause.

14. *uttered*] Lit. "opened" (marg.), but the word "uttered" gives the true meaning, and should not be altered. It is used with special reference to vows, Judg. xi. 35.

15. *the incense*] *i. e.* the smoke ascending as a cloud from the burnt sacrifice, which is always represented as a sweet savour acceptable as a symbol of the offerer's devotion. The whole of this clause is more suitable to a king than to a subject. See note on Ps. li. last verse.

16. *for my soul*] This again points to an individual, but to one who represents the nation, whose personal characteristics affected the whole state for weal or for woe. We seem to hear David speaking, though the words doubtless might befit any of his successors under similar circumstances.

18. *If I regard*] The word "regard" is happily chosen to express the deliberate approval of iniquity: "had I regarded iniquity with complacency, entertained it deliberately in my heart." The writer is fully conscious of sins of infirmity, error or ignorance, but not of presumptuous sin. Compare Job xxxi. 26, xxxvi. 21; Hab. i. 13; Prov. xxviii. 9.

20. *from me*] The expression in Hebrew is peculiar and emphatic, "from *being* with me;" the mercy which ever abideth with me is not withdrawn.

PSALM LXVII.

This was evidently composed for liturgical use; its date is uncertain, but it is probably later than David's time. The great thought is longing for the conversion of the world, as a result of peculiar manifestations of divine goodness to Israel; when God's face shines fully upon His people all nations will be attracted and won, and the reign of righteousness will be established. This is therefore, in the highest and most spiritual sense, a Messianic psalm; not indeed, strictly speaking, predictive, but expressing hopes and anticipations completely fulfilled by the manifestation of God in Christ.

The structure is graceful, resembling that of early psalms; the introductory strophe marked by "Selah" is followed by two strophes, each of three verses, divided also by Selah.

1. *God be merciful unto us*, &c.] This is taken from the High-priest's blessing in Num. vi. 24—26; but with a striking and important

2 That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

3 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and †govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

† Heb. *lead.*

5 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

6 *Then* shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* our own God, shall bless us.

7 God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

PSALM LXVIII.

1 A prayer at the removing of the ark. 4 An exhortation to praise God for his mercies, 7 for his care of the church, 19 for his great works.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm *or* Song of David.

LET [a]God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee †before him.

[a] Numb. 10. 35.

2 As smoke is driven away, *so* drive *them* away: as wax melteth

† Heb. *from his face.*

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variation. It substitutes Elohim for Jehovah. Thus the name Elohim occurs in the later, that of Jehovah in the older formula: this is irreconcileable with some modern speculations as to the use of the two names. The reason for the change appears to be that in most of the liturgical psalms, which were composed by the leaders of the Levitical choirs, the name Elohim is generally, though not exclusively, used. This may be because that name specially denotes the majesty and might of the Deity: whereas the High-priest in blessing the people uses the other name, which speaks most distinctly of covenanted privileges.

upon us] Or, "with us," abiding with us, our protector and guide. Cf. Ps. lxvi. 20, Heb. In Numbers the word "upon" is used.

2. *That thy way*] A remarkable prayer; the Psalmist directly states that the effect of God's goodness to Israel will be the conversion of the world, cf. Ps. xcviii. 3. It is to be observed that in this and the next verse three distinct words are now used to designate foreign nations; they are regarded under the various aspects of foreigners, races, communities: without losing their permanent characteristics they will be united in one religious community. In this verse the word rendered "nations" means **Gentiles**.

4. *for thou shalt*] The reason why the nations shall rejoice is stated to be the establishment of a universal kingdom of righteousness. This psalm brings one stream of Messianic prophecy, which presents the approach of a perfect manifestation of God, near to the point of junction with the other, which announces the advent and reign of a perfect King (see Introduction, § 18).

govern] Better as marg., **lead**. Lit. "and nations on the earth Thou wilt lead them;" be their guide: a promise of peculiar graciousness; cf. Pss. xxiii. 3, xxxi. 3; used elsewhere only of God's faithful and tried servants.

6. *Then shall the earth*] Or, "The land hath given her increase." This may be an expression of thankfulness for an abundant harvest, in which the Psalmist sees the sign or pledge of higher blessings. It is, however, more probably predictive, announcing the certain result of divine blessings. It is taken verbatim from Lev. xxvi. 4. Cf. Ps. lxxxv. 12.

PSALM LXVIII.

After an introduction in which Jehovah's might and mercy are described, *vv.* 1—6; His miracles in the wilderness, *vv.* 7—10, and victories at the head of His people, *vv.* 11—15, are referred to with astonishing force. His choice of Mount Zion to dwell upon, and His dwelling thereon with power, surrounded by His innumerable train, are the subjects of *vv.* 15—23. His visible ascents to it at various periods, attended by the representatives of the tribes, in celebration of His triumphs over His foes, and probably with special reference to His first triumphant ascent (2 S. vi.). are portrayed *vv.* 24—27. The remainder of the psalm anticipates His future conquests, and predicts the subjection, in coming days, of the whole world to His rule.

The title ascribes the psalm to David. The mention of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali in *v.* 27, in connection with Benjamin and Judah, as representatives of the Northern and Southern divisions of the kingdom respectively, is inconsistent with a date subsequent to the secession of the tribes. The prominence of Egypt and Ethiopia *v.* 31, and silence touching Babylon and Assyria, favour the supposition of a very early date. The style is abrupt, fragmentary, rugged, astonishingly graphic and forcible, and bespeaks an age of earliest poetry. A late date, as after the exile (Gesen., Hupfeld, Ewald, Olshausen, J., &c.), against common opinion, against the inscription, and the many marks of antiquity occurring in the psalm, seems intolerable.

The mention of the temple in *v.* 29 is not decisive against the Davidic origin of the

before the fire, *so* let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

3 But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them †exceedingly rejoice.

†Heb. *rejoice with gladness.*

4 Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

5 A father of the fatherless, and

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psalm: see Ps. lxv. 4. The word translated *temple* may mean "tabernacle," and is certainly, in Ps. v. 7 (where see note), applied to the tabernacle: see also Pss. xi. 4, xviii. 6: and 1 S. i. 9.

Some imagine the psalm to have been composed for the occasion mentioned in 2 S. vi. 12, and 1 Chro. xv., when the ark of God was transferred from the house of Obededom to Zion. But David wrote a different psalm (1 Chro. xvi. 7) for that occasion (Note 1); and the early part of this psalm is not appropriate to it. The mention too of the temple, or sanctuary, in *v.* 29 is rather suggestive of the idea that, when the psalm was written, the sanctuary had been some time established in Zion. Some imagine that it was written when the ark went out, as in 2 S. xi. 11, upon an expedition against a neighbouring foe. But the latter part of the psalm, *v.* 28 &c., seems unsuitable to such hypothesis. The supposition that it is a song of triumph on the return of the ark from an expedition against a vanquished foe (De Wette, &c.) is plausible, but no special word points decisively to such a narrowing of its purport. The description given above of the contents indicates the thread which connects its parts, at first sight unconnected. It is a song of national thanksgiving for mercies and triumphs vouchsafed up to the day of its composition; followed by deeply earnest, we may say Messianic, anticipations of victories over the whole world, to follow from Jehovah's choice of Zion.

Many interpretations of passages in it, as of *vv.* 14, 15, 30, must be looked upon as scarcely more than conjectures. Throughout it is most obscure; and thirteen words in it occur nowhere else.

The sacred name Elohim appears twenty-three times in the psalm; but also Jah in *v.* 4; Jehovah in *v.* 16; Adonai in *vv.* 11, 17; Shaddai in *v.* 14, &c. The latter name occurs in Ps. xci. 1; Num. xxiv. 4, 16; Job, passim; and seems highly poetical. No reliable argument as to date or author can, as it would seem, be drawn from these names.

Resemblances are noticed between places of the psalm and of Isaiah. Thus *vv.* 4, 6 resemble Isai. xl. 3, lviii. 7. The spirit and manner of the psalm do not in the least resemble those of Isaiah; but suggest the idea of a composition entirely original, though embodying, it may be, portions of more ancient songs as parts of its design. According to the principle to which we have adhered throughout (see the Introduction), we regard this psalm, agreeably with its inscription, as written by David, in the absence of any arguments which prove the said authority to be delusive in this case.

The great difference of opinion which exists among commentators, some accounting this psalm one of the very earliest, and some, one of the very latest, shews how impossible it is to settle the question of its date by internal evidence. The original song of David may have received additions (Hengst., &c.) in later times for temple-service, which now it is scarcely possible to separate from the original composition. In the Jewish ritual the psalm is used at Pentecost, the Feast of Thanksgiving for Harvest.

1, 2. *Let God arise*, &c.] When the ark of God moved from its resting-place at night, Num. x. 35, Moses said, *Rise up*, O Jehovah, *and let Thine enemies be scattered.* In the place of Numbers quoted, the holy name "Jehovah," and the imperative *rise up*, occur. In the psalm the name "Elohim" is substituted for Jehovah, and the 3rd person for the 2nd. The force of *vv.* 1, 2, 3 seems increased by rendering the Hebrew future as present: so they describe the simple fact: "God arises; His enemies are scattered; those that hate Him flee before His face. As smoke is driven away, leaving no trace, Thou dost drive them away: as wax melts before the fire, the wicked perish at the presence of God." The *wicked* are the enemies of God and His chosen; the *righteous* are His people, Pss. xiv. 5, xxxiii. 1, &c. Similar passages occur in Pss. xxxvii. 20, xcvii. 5; Hos. xiii. 3.

4. *Sing unto God*, &c.] Lit. "Sing unto God; sing praises to His name; make a way for Him that rideth over the deserts: His name is Jah (or in Jah): and rejoice before Him." The reading of the A. V., *extol Him that rideth upon the heavens*, appears to come from the Targum: so too M. Mendelssohn, "Macht Ihm Bahn der durch Aetherwüste fährt!" The addition to it in the P. B. V., "as it were upon an horse," appears to be made simply to amplify the idea that went before, or for the sake of the measure. The image presented to us in the literal rendering is that of a king travelling through the waste, for whom a way is made. A similar image, Isai. xl. 3, lvii. 14; Ps. xviii. 10. *Jah* is the expressive abbreviated form of Jehovah, familiar to all from its occurrence in Hallelujah. "His name is in Jah:" His essence, unchanging, eternal, self-existing, is expressed

a judge of the widows, *is* God in his holy habitation.

6 God setteth the solitary †in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.

†Heb. *in a house.*

7 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

8 The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: *even* Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

9 Thou, O God, didst †send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst †confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

†Heb. *shake out*

†Heb. *confirm it.*

10 Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

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in His ancient time-honoured title. See Exod. vi. 3.

5. *a judge*] *i. e.* a defender or avenger. See Exod. xxii. 22; Deut. x. 17, 18.

in his holy habitation] *i. e.* in heaven where He abides.

6. *God setteth the solitary*, &c.] God setteth the solitary in families; or, according to the marginal reading, **in a house** or **home**. The P. B. V. misses the sense, "He is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house," &c. It comes apparently from the LXX. (ὁ Θεὸς κατοικίζει μονοτρόπους ἐν οἴκῳ, κ. τ. λ.) and Vulg. (qui inhabitare facit unius moris in domo). These authorities seem to have interpreted the word (יְחִידִים) from the sense of "uniting" implied in יָחַד.

he bringeth out those, &c.] The import is, "He bringeth out of captivity captives, and restoreth to prosperity." The allusion is, in both clauses, to the wanderers in the wilderness. Some of them reached a home in the land of promise, but the most part perished through their rebellion in the waste. Cf. Ps. cvii. 4, 40; Heb. iii. 17. The allusion naturally leads to the passionate enthusiastic address which follows.

7, 8. *O God, when thou*, &c.] The miracles of the march: and first, the appearance of God in Sinai, Ex. xix. 16, 18, the most signal of all.—*Selah*, see Ps. iii. 2 and note. The description of the miracles of the desert moves the deepest soul of the Psalmist, and calls for special musical accompaniment.

8. *the heavens also dropped*, &c.] We read in Judg. v. 4, *the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water*, so that we may understand by the phrase of *the heavens dropping*, the floods of rain which accompanied the awful storm of thunder and lightning: Ex. xix. 16. Thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud, are described as upon the mount.

even Sinai, &c.] The lit. rendering is rather "that Sinai," or "yon Sinai" (δεικτικῶς; as if it were enough to point to it and mention its name, to describe what occurred). "at the presence of God." The words "was moved" are not in the original, but the omission of the verb descriptive of what occurred is not without force: the full expression may be gathered from the original place, Judg. ubi supr. In Ps. lxxviii. 54, "that mountain" (so the word should be rendered) means "that well-known mountain." Ps. civ. 25, "that sea" is "that sea" of which the name is enough. Ps. xlviii. 14, "this God."

9. *Thou, O God*, &c.] The P. B. V. renders, "Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon Thine inheritance, and refreshedst it when it was weary." The pause in the Hebr. is after "God:" "Thou didst send a plentiful rain, O God: and Thine inheritance when a weary Thou didst refresh!"

The rain is metaphorical, and signifies the abundant blessings of manna (Exod. xvi. 4; Ps. lxxviii. 24), food, water, &c., through which the wanderers were preserved. God's "people" are meant by *His inheritance*.

10. *Thy congregation*, &c.] The word rendered here *congregation* is of doubtful import. The LXX. render "Thy living creatures," Jerome, "Thy creatures," others, "Thy flock." See Mic. vii. 14, 15; Ps. lxxiv. 19, in which the terms "congregation" and "poor ones" are again coupled. In *v.* 30 the same word is rendered "company." The meaning is, "Thy people dwelt there safely, guarded by Thee against innumerable foes." The description is still of the march, and *therein* seems to refer to the waste.

prepared] *i. e.* "a table in the wilderness," 1 Chro. xii. 39.

the poor] Sing., *i.e.* the needy and toil-worn wanderer.

From the march, through the wilderness to the borders of the promised land, the Psalmist naturally turns, *vv.* 11—14, to the victories, by which, in times following, it was obtained and secured. The victory of Deborah and Barak is however, it would seem, chiefly, if not exclusively, in his thoughts. Graphic, vigorous sketches of circumstances connected with it seem added, without attention to historical order. The great obscurity of the psalm may arise in part from its embodying fragments of earliest psalmody unaltered. The first verse is taken, as has been noticed, from the book of Numbers; *vv.* 7, 8, from the Song of Deborah; others may be taken, for example, from "the book of the wars of the

11 The Lord gave the word: great *was* the [1]company of those that published *it*.

12 Kings of armies [1]did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

13 Though ye have lien among the pots, *yet shall ye be as* the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

14 When the Almighty scattered kings [1]in it, it was *white* as snow in Salmon.

15 The hill of God *is as* the hill of Bashan; an high hill *as* the hill of Bashan.

[1] Or, *for her, she was.*

Lord," Num. xxi. 14 ('Plain Commentary,' Vol. 1. p. 443), and so contain allusions to the interpretation of which we have no clue.

11. *The Lord gave*] Or, **gives** the word, *i. e.* of command; and victory follows, as in the beginning light and life followed His word; Gen. i. 3; Ps. xxxiii. 9.

great was the company, &c.] Heb. "the women publishing, or proclaiming the glad news, are, or were, a great host:" or, "a great host of women sang the song of triumph." So the women sang a song of triumph when Pharaoh's hosts were destroyed, Exod. xv. 20. So Deborah sang, Judg. v. So, when David slew Goliath, the women sang, 1 S. xviii. 6. See also 2 S. i. 20.

12. *Kings of armies did flee*, &c.] The action is present; **Kings of armies**, opposed to Jehovah God of armies, (as in the margin) **flee, flee away**; see Judg. v. 3, 19. "They leave a mighty spoil, in which the women who tarry at home (Judg. v. 24, cf. Eur. 'Hec.' 1275, οἰκουρός) share, and distribute to the household." See also Judg. v. 30, where the mother of Sisera anticipates the rich spoil that would fall to her lot through Sisera's triumph. It is possible that we have here the words of the original song of victory.

13. *Though ye have lien*, &c.] It was noticed that much of the psalm is an imitation of the Song of Deborah. Cf. *vv.* 8, 9. with *v.* 5 of the song, and *vv.* 11, 12, with *v.* 19, &c. Here the address of *v.* 16 of the song seems to be imitated: "Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds to hear the bleatings of the flocks?" So now, "What! dwell ye among the sheepfolds?" (Note 2, infr.), or, "Will ye lie among the sheepfolds?—The wings of a dove are covered with silver, and her feathers with pale green gold;" an expression, abrupt, allusive, and perhaps ironical. The tribes who stay away from the fight are taunted, as in the verse of the Song of Deborah alluded to, with enjoying a country life, while Jehovah's battles are fought by others. According to this interpretation, the words, "What! dwell ye among sheepfolds?" &c., or, "Will ye lie among the sheepfolds?" &c., are the remonstrances addressed to the absent tribes: and the following words, "The wings of a dove," &c., are the supposed excuses of the indifferent ones in the midst of the flocks, herds, doves, of their rustic life, repeated in the address with a bitter irony.

14. *in it*] *i. e.* in the land. The literal meaning of the words that follow is, **it snowed in Salmon**; or, **Thou dost snow in Salmon**. Some interpret, "When the Almighty scattered kings in the land, it was covered with booty and the bodies of the slain, as Salmon with snow in winter;" the idea being the same as in 'Æn.' v. 865, XII. 36; Ovid, 'Fasti,' I. 558. But the words of the original must be strained to bear it. Neither booty nor the bodies of the slain, nor, of course, any comparison of them with the snow, are mentioned. Salmon is seldom or never covered with snow; it is a low dark mountain near Sichem, and no reason is apparent why it should be chosen as the image of a snowy mountain. In all likelihood the words are again extracted from a more ancient song, and the allusion in them may be undiscoverable. Herder ('Ebr. P.' II. p. 8) supposes them to be such an extract; and further to be the words of the indifferentists above introduced, excusing themselves for their absence from the war on the ground that it was winter, and that snow covered the summit of the little low hill of Salmon. Others consider the words as proverbial, "When the Almighty scattered kings in the land, it was snow-white on Salmon;" the contrast of joy and sorrow in victory and discomfiture being like the contrast between Salmon, the dark mountain, black with woods (Judg. ix. 48), or clad in a vesture of snow. But in the original there is no mention of whiteness or darkness, and the interpretation supposes the mount Salmon in its dark mantle of wood, or white covering of snow, to be so familiar to all as to require only the briefest allusion in order to point a comparison intelligible to all. The simple literal rendering of the words is so uncertain that the import of the whole passage can only be to a great extent a matter of conjecture.

15. *The hill of God is as the hill*, &c.] Heb. "a mountain of God (see Ps. xxxvi. 6) is the mountain of Bashan: a mountain of peaks is the mountain of Bashan: why look ye askance, or, enviously, ye high-peaked mountains, upon the mountain which God desires?" &c. The A.V. "Why leap ye," &c. seems to come from

16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? *this is* the hill *which* God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever.

17 The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, [1]*even* thousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them, *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*.

18 [b]Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts [1]for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*.

19 Blessed *be* the Lord, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, *even* the God of our salvation. Selah.

20 *He that is* our God *is* the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord *belong* the issues from death.

21 But God shall wound the head

[1] Or, even *many thousands*.

[b] Eph. 4. 8.

[1] Heb. in the man.

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the Targum, Quare subsilitis, &c.; so too Luther.

A change of subject. The mountain-chain of Bashan, lofty, many-peaked, rocky, precipitous, looking down as from a world without, upon the gently undulating, lowly hill of Zion, is addressed as though regarding with contempt and envy the choice of God to dwell upon the latter for ever: see Ps. cxxxii. 14; 1 K. viii. 13. Bashan extended to the foot of Mount Hermon, so that the chain of Hermon, or Anti-Libanus, may be meant here (see Stanley's 'S. and P.,' 1st ed. p. 114, note); or Bashan may be used in a general way to signify a land outside the promised land, and unconnected with it. Afterwards, *v.* 22, it is used to typify, generally, a wild inaccessible distant region, out of which none could bring back, except God. The joyous, exulting, triumphant air of the original can hardly be imitated in any rendering.

17. *The chariots of God*, &c.] Lit. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, thousands, and again thousands. The Lord is in the midst of them: (it is a) Sinai in holiness, or, in the sanctuary." The chariots of God, the invisible hosts by which He is surrounded (2 K. ii. 11, vi. 17; see also Dan. vii. 10; Matt. xxvi. 53), are in multitude innumerable. (See Note 3.) Jehovah is in the midst of them, as once on Sinai, in majesty ineffable, Deut. xxxiii. 2: or, Jehovah is in the midst, (Zion) is Sinai with its majestic accompaniments: or, Jehovah is in the midst; ('tis) Sinai in majesty and holiness: or, once again, Jehovah, &c. (all) Sinai is in the sanctuary. The purport is plain; Jehovah the heavenly King is manifest on Zion, as once on Sinai. The last-named rendering expresses the meaning indirectly.

18. *Thou hast ascended*, &c.] Otherwise, "Thou hast ascended to Thy throne in heaven (see *v.* 34, and Pss. vii. 7, xviii. 16, xciii. 4). Thou hast led captive the conquered enemy, received gifts among men, or, consisting of men (marg. in the man), *i. e.* of men vanquished by the glory of the Victor, and devoted to Him: and (subdued) even the rebellious, that Jah Elohim should dwell among them." See 2 Cor. vi. 16; John xiv. 23. Jehovah as God ascends to His throne above; as Leader of His visible hosts, He leads captive the vanquished; all people give Him gifts, 2 S. viii. 2, 6; the obstinate and rebellious too are subdued, and become part of His possession. So close is the relationship of Jehovah to David and to his people, that the offices of King dwelling and ruling in Heaven, and of the present ruler of His hosts, are mingled together. The precise rendering of the original is doubtful: but of the general sense there is no doubt.

The LXX. render "Thou receivedst gifts among men; yea even the rebellious, for the purpose of dwelling:" of which the sense is doubtful. St Paul, Eph. iv. 8, quotes the words differently, "Having ascended on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Does he quote the sense of the Targum, which says: "Captivam duxisti captivitatem, docuisti verba Legis: dedisti dona filiis hominum"? or, is it not most reasonable to say that he referred to the words as they would naturally be interpreted in the light of Christ's Ascension, and sending down of His gifts to man; and that he quotes rather the spirit and substance of the passage than its actual words? Jehovah ascended to Zion (and to heaven) followed by the vanquished, and laden with gifts, to dwell among His people always, and to give gifts, as *v.* 19 implies. Christ ascended into heaven, and gave gifts of grace to His people: and to His office in heaven the following verses apply, as well as to that of Jehovah Himself. The Syr. and Arab. versions both interpret the passage as the Targum.

19. *Blessed be the Lord*, &c.] Otherwise, "Blessed be Jehovah day by day; if one layeth a burden on us, our God is our salvation." Or, "Blessed, &c.: day by day He beareth our burdens." The thought of this verse is amplified in *v.* 20: *issues*, *i. e.* means of escape, Eccl. vii. 18 (Hebr.). As God is merciful to His friends, so to *His enemies*, *vv.* 21—23, unless they repent, He is strict in execution of chastisement.—*Selah*, see above, *v.* 7.

21. *But*] Or, **Surely**. The *hairy scalp* means "the head thickly covered with hair" (as of Absalom or Samson), indicating youth and strength.

of his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

22 The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring *my people* again from the depths of the sea:

23 That thy foot may be [1]dipped in the blood of *thine* enemies, *and* the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

24 They have seen thy goings, O God; *even* the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

25 The singers went before, the players on instruments *followed* after; among *them were* the damsels playing with timbrels.

26 Bless ye God in the congregations, *even* the Lord, [1]from the fountain of Israel.

27 There *is* little Benjamin *with* their ruler, the princes of Judah [1]*and* their council, the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali.

28 Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

29 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.

[1] r. red.

[1] Or, ye that are of the fountain of Israel.

[1] Or, with their company.

22, 23. *The Lord said*, &c.] Lit. "I will bring again from Bashan: I will bring again from the depths of the sea:" see Amos ix. 2, 3. The reference is not to Jehovah's people, as the A. V. interprets, but rather to His enemies, in continuation of *v.* 21, and in connection with *v.* 23. "Though Mine enemies," He says, "hide themselves in the forests of Bashan, see *v.* 15, or in the depths of the sea, I will bring them back; that thou mayest slay them and dip thy foot in blood; and that the tongue of thy dogs may lap up of it." The exact rendering is, "that thou mayest wound, or shake, thy foot in blood; the tongue of thy dogs (may have) from the enemy its portion." (See Note 4.)

24. *They have seen thy goings*, &c.] Again a change of subject: description of a solemn visible procession to Mount Zion. The invisible train was hinted at above, *v.* 17. The phrase *Thy goings* is a poetical amplification, as in *v.* 35; or it indicates that such processions occurred often, on special occasions of triumph. *They have seen, i. e.* men, friends and foes, have seen, and do see, from day to day. *My King* is emphatic; it is the King as well as Lord Who heads this procession.

in the sanctuary] Cf. *v.* 17. The order of procession: first went (or go) the singers; the minstrels, or players on instruments, follow: **in the midst**(they are)**of the damsels** who sing the words, *v.* 26, and play upon the timbrels. See Exod. xv. 1—20.

26. *Bless ye God*, &c.] Or, according to the marg. reading, "Bless God, &c., ye that are from the fountain of Israel," *i. e.* "Bless God, ye that spring from Israel, the source of this people." Similarly Isai. xlviii. 1. li. 1. *In the congregations, i.e.* in full assemblies, as this day, of the people. The P. B. V. renders the second clause, "from the ground of the heart."

27. *There is little Benjamin*, &c.] Hints descriptive of the representatives of the tribes taking part in the procession. The lit. rendering is, "There (שָׁם, in that place,) is little Benjamin, their ruler, the princes of Judah, their company; the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali." *Benjamin* is named, it may be, as the tribe of Saul the first king and conqueror, in whose limits too the sanctuary lay: Deut. xxxiii. 12; Josh. xviii. 11, &c. He is styled *little*, as the youngest son of Jacob; or in reference to 1 S. ix. 21: *their ruler*, or leader, *i. e.* ruling or leading those that take part in the procession; or, it may be, with reference to the preceding verses, and to Saul the great Benjamite chief, (see 1 S. xiv. 47,) "their conqueror," *i. e.* subduer of the nations around. *Judah* is described as the tribe of David; and the words "their closely compacted company" or "council" or "stone," *i. e.* bulwark, (Gen. xlix. 24,) are added, to indicate the strength of the great tribe. Two of the northern tribes are specified for all. Perhaps Zebulun and Naphtali are selected in consequence of the mention of them in the Song of Deborah (see Judg. v. 18). The P. B. V. renders the verse almost as above.

28. *Thy God hath commanded*, &c.] Jehovah is now seated on Zion. The Psalmist (in conclusion of this song of triumph), in a spirit of divine prescience, prays that His power may soon spread everywhere. "Thy God, O Israel, hath commanded (or ordained, Ps. cxxxiii. 3; Lev. xxv. 21) thy strength, *i. e.* thy dominion or power. *Strengthen, O God*, &c. Complete the work already begun. Threaten with Thy vengeance, unless they yield obedience, the company of spearmen (*v.* 30), the multitude of bulls (infr.), with the calves of the people (infr.), unless they will submit themselves with offerings of silver. Scatter the people that delight in war."

29. *Because of*, &c.] *i.e.* "Out of respect for Thy temple at or over (Stanley's 'S. and P.' p. 171) Jerusalem, kings shall bring presents unto Thee." This rendering of the particle (מִן) *because of* is uncommon. Per-

30 Rebuke [1]the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till every one* submit himself with pieces of silver: [2]scatter thou the people *that* delight in war.

31 Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

32 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:

33 To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, *which were* of old; lo, he doth [3]send out his voice, *and that* a mighty voice.

34 Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency *is* over Israel, and his strength *is* in the [4]clouds.

35 O God, *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel *is* he that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. Blessed *be* God.

[1] Or, *the beast of the reeds.*
[2] Or, *he scattereth.*
[3] Heb. *give.*
[4] Or, *heavens.*

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haps it is best (see *v.* 35) to consider the sentence as abrupt and elliptical. "Out of Thy temple at Jerusalem (shall go forth such grace and power that) kings shall acknowledge it and bring presents accordingly." Dr Kay compares with the prophecy Isai. xviii. 7; Ps. lxxvi. 11, 12, and 2 Chro. xxxii. 23, for its partial fulfilment. It should be noticed that some authorities render the particle (מִן) "out of" or "beginning with" Thy temple at Jerusalem. Thus the idea is the same as Luke xxiv. 47: also see Pss. cx. 2, cxxxv. 21.

30. *Rebuke*, &c.] Or, "Rebuke (Pss. ix. 5, lxxx. 16) the beasts of the reeds (as in the marg.), the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people: each (now) submits himself with pieces of silver: He has scattered the people that delight in war," &c. The beast of the reeds (see Isai. xix. 6; Ezek. xxix. 3, 4) is supposed to be the crocodile or hippopotamus, and to symbolize Egypt. But *v.* 31 represents the princes or ambassadors of Egypt as bringing gifts: and it is not likely that in two consecutive verses Egypt should be described as a beast requiring rebuke, and then by its own name offering gifts. *The multitude of the bulls* is commonly interpreted of "princes," and *calves of the people*, Hebr. *peoples*, as the "subject-soldiery" or "masses." All this is mere conjecture. The general meaning, as above, is plain. "Threaten all such peoples with vengeance, unless each submits with offerings of silver." According to the above rendering, the mood suddenly changes from the imperative to the past or present. So the threat is described as accomplishing its purpose. "Each submits humbly with pieces of silver: He has scattered the people who delight in war." The grammar can only be explained on the supposition that the expressions are abrupt, allusive, perhaps fragmentary, rather than descriptive and full.

32. *Sing unto God*, &c.] Conclusion of the whole. "Let all nations sing Thy praise, O God, Who hast done such wonders, and still art doing." The import of *Selah* mentioned above, *vv.* 7, 19, accords with this place; the musical pitch is raised as *v.* 33 is sung; and possibly the voice of Jehovah Himself in thunder is heard at the words, "Lo! He doth send out His voice. 'Tis a voice of might!"

33. *heavens of heavens*] *i.e.* the highest heavens (Deut. x. 14; 1 K. viii. 27), which were of old before the creation of the heavens (Gen. i. 1) which encompass the earth.

34. *Ascribe*, &c.] "Confess the might and majesty of God seen in Israel's history, to be seen in its coming history, and reaching to heaven and earth."

35. *out of thy holy places*, &c.] "Terrible art Thou on account of the demonstrations of Thy power which Thou sendest forth out of Thy holy places." See *v.* 28; Ps. xx. 2. The plural seems a poetical license, as in Pss. lxxxiv 1, cxxxii. 5, 7, &c. (Hebr.).

his people] Heb. the people.

The faith and hope expressed briefly, but with intense earnestness, in the latter verses of this psalm, and the confident assurance of Jehovah's future reign in Zion over all lands (though its manner of accomplishment is not stated), seem as remarkable as the fire and brilliancy of the early portion of it. As a whole the psalm cannot be considered as referring to Christ's kingdom; but the application to Him in the New Testament of *vv.* 17, 18, and the natural application to His kingdom of the latter verses, compel us to regard it as in a sense, though not the most direct, Messianic; requiring Christ and His day for its complete elucidation. Such a view of the psalm, compared with the exulting Christian meditations upon it, of Bishop Horne, and of the author of the 'Plain Commentary' (to instance only two authors), must needs appear cold and shallow to some. But the object of this Commentary is to expound the text as it was read in earliest times. To apply it to Christian times, and add to it Christian *meditations*, is not hard, but is foreign to the purpose; and interferes with the exhibition of an original majestic Scripture in its simplicity and intense instructiveness to those for whom it was composed.

NOTES on PSALM LXVIII.

1. The psalm appended 1 Chro. xvi. 7—36 (see the note there), though added to in subsequent times, probably contains the original psalm put into the hands of Asaph, &c.

2. The word שְׁפַתַּיִם, and the similar word מִשְׁפְּתַיִם (Gen. xlix. 14; Judg. v. 16; see the notes at those places), are generally rendered stalls, pens, or folds; the former, in the text, *pots*. To lie among the folds would seem to mean, to lead a peaceful country life at ease.

A very clear and excellent summary of the various interpretations of this place may be found in Perowne, 'Book of Psalms,' l. c.

3. The Hebrew word שִׁנְאָן occurs only here: it means in all probability "repetition," from שׁנה. The LXX. render *χιλιάδες εὐθηνούντων*, deriving the word from שאנן, as if it were שאנן. The Vulg. renders "millia lætantium." The Targum says, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, blazing with flame, led by 2000 angels," &c. Hence, perhaps, the interpretation and rendering of the A.V.

4. The translation of the Prayer-Book Version comes apparently from the LXX. and Vulg., which render respectively *ὅπως ἂν βαφῇ ὁ πούς σου ἐν αἵματι, ἡ γλῶττα τῶν κυνῶν σου ἐξ ἐχθρῶν παρ' αὐτοῦ*; and, ut intingatur pes tuus in sanguine, lingua canum tuorum ex inimicis ab ipso. Instead of תִּמְחַץ, they read תחמץ. The confusion may easily have arisen from *v.* 21. If any emendation of the text is to be admitted, the reading תרחץ (Ps. lviii. 10) is natural. One of Kenn. MSS. seems to favour this reading.

PSALM LXIX.

1 *David complaineth of his affliction.* 13 *He prayeth for deliverance.* 22 *He devoteth his enemies to destruction.* 30 *He praiseth God with thanksgiving.*

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, *A Psalm* of David.

SAVE me, O God; for the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

2 I sink in †deep mire, where *there is* no standing: I am come into †deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

3 I am weary of my crying: my

† Heb. *the mire of depth.*
† Heb. *depth of waters.*

PSALM LXIX.

The circumstances under which this psalm was composed, and the character of the writer, are intimated with more than usual distinctness. The Psalmist was in deep affliction, in danger of perishing, exhausted by mourning, surrounded by bitter enemies, an object of contumely, insult, and wrong; he is cast into a pit, in deep waters, at the point of death: his food is mingled with gall, his drink is vinegar. On the other hand, though deeply conscious of sin, he is yet certain that his sufferings are directly owing to his devotion to God, to his zeal for His house, and that he bears reproaches aimed at God; he is sure of God's love and favour, and has but one wish, to see His face. He speaks of others as sharing his trouble as the Lord's prisoner, and expresses a sure hope that God will save Zion and build the cities of Judah, and that the seed of the righteous will inherit and dwell in the land.

The psalm is attributed to David in the inscription, and it bears so close a resemblance to Pss. xx., xxxv., xl., xliv., and li., that even Köster admits they may have been composed by one writer. The coincidences with Jeremiah's history are so numerous and striking that many critics are disposed to believe that he was the author (see however notes on *vv.* 1 and 2); others believe that it was written in the period of the captivity: but such conjectures rest on no solid basis, and are advanced and rejected with equal facility. If the inscription be admitted—and there is no sufficient reason for rejecting it—it must be supposed that David wrote the psalm either immediately before, or during his exile from Jerusalem, and that under the controlling influence of the Spirit of God his utterances were so modified as to find their true and complete fulfilment in the person of Christ, of Whom he was a type. The very numerous references to the psalm in the New Testament leave no doubt as to its general acceptance as a Messianic psalm in the time of our Lord: some of them distinctly attribute it to David, all assume its prophetic or typical significance. The imprecations upon the fierce and malignant enemies of God's persecuted servant bear the character of prediction, nor can their fulfilment be denied. The devout reader, who sees throughout a portraiture of Christ, under the veil of an imperfect but really typical representative, attains in all probability most nearly to the true meaning of the psalm.

The metrical system is highly artistic, a fact nearly conclusive against the supposition of a late date; it consists of five strophes responding to each other in reverse order, with 4, 8, 9, 8, 4 verses severally: with a liturgical close, verses 35, 36.

A Psalm of David] It is ascribed to David by St Paul, Rom. xi. 9.

1. *the waters are come in*] This expression appears to be metaphorical; it occurs in

throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away.

5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my [†]sins are not hid from thee.

†Heb. *guiltiness.*

6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

9 [a]For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; [b]and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

a John 2. 17. b Rom. 15. 3.

10 When I wept, *and chastened* my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

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other psalms, especially in those attributed by all critics to David. Cf. Pss. xviii. 4, xlii. 7, lxxxviii. 7, 17; see also Job xxii. 11 and xxvii. 20. It is supposed by some to refer to Jeremiah's being let down into a pit, or cistern, but we are expressly told that there was no water in that.

2. *deep waters*] The two figures in this verse taken together are irreconcileable with the reference to Jeremiah: they give a most lively and forcible representation of David (see Ps. xl. 2), and of Him Whom David prefigured, in the hour of His desolation.

3. *mine eyes fail*] Cf. Deut. xxviii. 32.

wait for my God] See note on Job xiii. 15.

4. *They that hate me without a cause*] See John xv. 25. The quotation of these words by our Lord proves that they are applicable to the Messiah. David might say of some (as in Ps. xxxv. 19), but certainly not of all his enemies, that they hated him without cause.

then I restored] Dr Kay refers to the accusation of Shimei, 2 S. xvi. 8. David had not seized the throne, as was then asserted.

5. *O God, thou knowest my foolishness*] It is remarkable that in appealing to God the Psalmist does not, as elsewhere, assert his innocence, but simply confesses his foolishness and guilt. This is quite intelligible in the case of David, who always distinguishes carefully between his position in relation to God and to his subjects: it is far less suitable to Jeremiah, who owns no expressions corresponding to this.

my sins] This leaves no doubt as to the personal character of the psalm. The Psalmist goes to the depth of his own consciousness. Though blameless in his relations to his persecutors he knows that what occurs is the result and punishment of sin.

sins] The Hebrew word denotes "guilt:" hence in the marg. "guiltiness;" but the original is plural, and the Psalmist refers to certain acts by which he had contracted guilt. LXX. πλημμέλειαι. Vulg. delicta. It is better to retain the A. V.

6. *be ashamed*] As they would be if one were utterly forsaken, whose sin had been pardoned, and whose repentance had been sealed by devotion to God's service. Such a prayer implies, and is the expression of, a sure hope: its tone is confident. The Psalmist appeals to God's power as the God of hosts, to His covenanted relations as the God of Israel: there is a world of promise in the combination of the two names.

7. *for thy sake*] The Psalmist in this and in the following verses attributes his sufferings directly to his zeal in God's service. This is one of the reasons why the psalm is attributed to Jeremiah, to whom such expressions are undoubtedly applicable (see ch. xv. 15): but they are true of God's servants in all times; David may have felt that the real secret of the enmity which he encountered, whatever the pretext might be, was hatred of the justice and religion which he upheld. In the highest sense the statement is absolutely applicable to the Messiah.

8. *I am become a stranger*] Cited twice by St John, i. 11 and vii. 5. Cf. Ps. xxxi. 11; Isai. liii. 3, and Job xix. 13.

9. *the zeal of thine house*] Or, "jealousy for thine house:" cf. 2 K. x. 16. This evidently points to a special and extraordinary instance, or habit, of zeal, such as was shewn by David and the best of his successors. See Ps. cxxxii. 1—5, and cf. cxix. 139. It might of course be said by Jeremiah or any of the prophets, but with far less propriety than by David. It can only be applied by a very forced construction to a prophet writing in the captivity, when the temple did not exist. The application to our Lord is made by St John, ii. 17.

the reproaches] See Rom. xv. 3.

10—12. The feelings here described are quite in harmony with those which breathe

11 I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.

12 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I *was* the song of the †drunkards.

† Heb. *drinkers of strong drink.*

13 But as for me, my prayer *is* unto thee, O LORD, *in* an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

14 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

15 Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

16 Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness *is* good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

17 And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: †hear me speedily.

† Heb. *make haste to hear me*

18 Draw nigh unto my soul, *and* redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies.

19 Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries *are* all before thee.

20 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked *for some* †to take pity, but *there was* none; and for comforters, but I found none.

† Heb. *to lament with me.*

21 They gave me also gall for my meat; [c]and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

[c] Matth. 27. 34, 48. Mark 15. 23. John 19. 29.

22 [d]Let their table become a snare before them: and *that which should*

[d] Rom. 11. 9, 10.

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in psalms composed during the period of extreme depression and suffering, mental and bodily, which immediately preceded the outburst of Absalom's rebellion. One point, however, stands out here more prominently, the consciousness that the Psalmist was hated above all things because of his devotion to God's service. Cf. Ps. xxxv. 13, 16; Job xvii. 6, xxx. 9. This portion of the psalm has no direct bearing upon our Lord's life. No such external demonstrations of sorrow, no fasting, no sackcloth, gave occasion to revilings in His case; on the contrary, He was reproached for neglecting them.

12. *sit in the gate*] *i. e.* even the magistrates and rulers; see note on Job v. 4, xxix. 7, and Ps. ix. 15. Cf. also Mark xv. 31.

song] Thus Job xxx. 9.

drunkards] Or, drinkers of strong wine.

13. *acceptable time*] See Ps. xxxii. 6; Isai. xlix. 8, lv. 6; 2 Cor. vi. 2.

14. The same metaphors as in *vv.* 1, 2: evidently representing the perilous condition of the Psalmist under different, and, if they were taken literally, incongruous, figures. The application to Jeremiah is therefore groundless.

18—21. In these verses the Psalmist describes his condition in terms which belong so completely to Him Whom he represented, as to obscure their primary application. They are but partially applicable to David, who was never abandoned by all his friends, or to Jeremiah, who found pity and warm sympathy even among the princes, or even to any prophet under the captivity, who found true and faithful comforters among their countrymen. The last special circumstances could only be figuratively true of any save Christ in the hour of His Passion.

19. *my reproach*] Ps. xxii. 6. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 29.

20. *I am full of heaviness*] The Hebrew expresses "deadly faintness." Cf. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38.

21. Literally, "They gave, or put, gall in my food." The word rendered gall includes all poisonous, or even very bitter ingredients; hence the fitness of the application to the wine mingled with gall which our Saviour tasted, but which He would not drink. See notes on Matt. xxvii. 34; Joh. xix. 29.

22—28. Regarding these imprecations as simple outpourings of bitter indignation, they belong to the spirit of the Old Testament, which breathes of judgment rather than of mercy: regarding them as predictions, there can be no doubt of their fulfilment. In either case they are to be looked upon not as utterances of Him Whom the Psalmist prefigured, but of a human soul wrought almost to madness by the triumph of cruelty and crime.

22. *their table*] As they administered "gall" and "vinegar," see *v.* 21, so must they in turn know the bitterness of frustrated desires. The table is an emblem of prosperity; see xxiii. 5.

and that which should, &c.] Or, **and a trap to them in their security**; *i.e.* while they are at ease, in a state of perfect security, let sudden destruction come on them; just as they injured him who was at peace with them. The A. V. follows Calvin, who

have been for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap.

23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

24 Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

25 Let [1]their habitation be desolate; *and* [2]let none dwell in their tents.

26 For they persecute *him* whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of [3]those whom thou hast wounded.

27 Add [4]iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness.

28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

29 But I *am* poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

[1] Heb. *their palace.*
[2] Heb. *let there not be a dweller.*
[3] Heb. *thy wounded.*
[4] Or, *punishment of iniquity.*

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renders the passage "quæ ad pacem sunt (pacifica eorum), Deus convertat in exitium." This gives a good sense, and harmonizes with the original, but is too paraphrastic for a translation. The mind reverts naturally to the ruin brought upon our Lord's countrymen by their adherence to rites from which all life had departed.

a trap] As a wild beast grasps at food, and falls into a snare.

23. *their eyes be darkened*] In retribution for their malignant joy in gazing upon the sorrows of the righteous: thus too the trembling of the loins (cf. Dan. v. 6, Nah. ii. 10) punishes the abuse of strength. The expression "darkening of the eyes," however, is equivalent to darkening of the understanding in many passages. See Isai. vi. 10, and the quotations Matt. xiii. 14; John xii. 39, 40; Rom. xi. 8; 2 Cor. iii. 14.

25. *their habitation*] The Hebrew word signifies specially the circular enclosure in which shepherds or nomadic tribes kept their cattle. This applies better to David's time than either to that of Jeremiah, when the open country was occupied by the Assyrians, or to that of the captivity in Babylon. The application to Judas by St Peter (Acts i. 20) proceeds on the general principle that all curses of the Old Testament come in their fulness upon those in whom wickedness reached its culminating point; or it may be because Ahithophel, against whom this imprecation, if uttered by David, was probably directed, was a type of the betrayer of the Son of David.

26. These curses are strictly and exactly retributive, and as such inevitable consequences of divine justice. The wicked are to suffer above all things for their unpitying cruelty. It is observable that sufferings which are inflicted by God, and indications of His displeasure, are here represented by the Psalmist as calling for compassion and tender sympathy on the part of man. Thus 2 Chro. xxvii. 9; Job xix. 21; Isai. liii. 4.

talk to the grief] Or, "tell of the grief;" they dwell upon every detail, recount the marks of God's anger with malignant curiosity; cf. Ps. xli. 5—8. This passage again is far more suitable to David than to Jeremiah, who was smitten by the enemies of God and bore no traces of divine displeasure.

27. *Add iniquity unto their iniquity*] This rendering is perfectly correct, and preferable to that suggested in the margin of our A.V., viz. punishment of iniquity. The Psalmist refers to the record of sins in God's book, which is not to be blotted out, but to be accumulated unto the day of judgment. This of course assumes their persistence in evil.

come into thy righteousness] The expression is somewhat peculiar. To come into God's righteousness is to be a partaker of it, whether by communication or imputation: to be an object of sanctifying or justifying grace. In this passage the latter effect is undoubtedly that which the Psalmist contemplates. He does not pray that they should remain in a state of unconversion, not becoming righteous, but that being unconverted they should not be dealt with as righteous, suffered to prosper and to escape punishment.

28. *book of the living*] See Exod. xxxii. 32, and compare Isai. iv. 3; Dan. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 3. The "book of the living" includes all who are preserved in this life by the divine goodness, who not only live, but are deemed worthy to live. The figure may be taken from the register in which the names of all citizens were enrolled. See Ezek. xiii. 9.

with the righteous] This clause proves that the book of the living does not include the names of those who are not the objects of God's love. Cf. Ps. lxxxvii. 6; Ezek. xiii. 9, and Luke x. 20, "Your names are written in heaven."

29. *But I*, &c.] This verse describes the actual condition and certain hope of the Psalmist in contrast to his enemies. They are proud and prosperous but will be brought low, he is lowly and afflicted but will be exalted.

30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

31 *This* also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

32 The [1]humble shall see *this*, *and* be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

33 For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.

34 Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that [†]moveth therein.

35 For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

36 The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

PSALM LXX.

David soliciteth God to the speedy destruction of the wicked, and preservation of the godly.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, to bring to remembrance.

MAKE *haste*, [a]O God, to deliver me; make haste [†]to help me, O LORD.

2 [b]Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

3 Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.

4 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

5 But I *am* poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

[a] Ps. 40. 13, &c.
[†] Heb. *to my help.*
[b] Ps. 35. 4. & 71. 13.

PSALM LXXI.

1 *David, in confidence of faith, and experience of God's favour, prayeth both for himself, and against the enemies of his soul.* 14 *He promiseth constancy.* 17 *He prayeth for perseverance.* 19 *He praiseth God, and promiseth to do it cheerfully.*

IN [a]thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

[a] Ps. 31. 1.

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30. *magnify him with thanksgiving*] Cf. Ps. l. 14.

31. Or, **And it shall please the Lord better than an ox, a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.** The horns mark the age of the bullock, not under three years, the hoofs its ceremonial cleanness, thus together representing the most perfect offering ordained by the law; cf. Lev. xi. 3.

32. The verse may be rendered, **The humble have seen it, and they will rejoice; let your heart live, ye who seek the Lord.** Cf. Ps. xxii. 26.

33. *his prisoners*] Those who suffer imprisonment, or generally, oppression and persecution for His sake. This expression, though suitable to Jeremiah, is too general to affect the question of authorship. Cf. Ps. lxviii. 6.

35. *will save Zion*] The natural inference from this verse is that Zion is in danger, and that the cities of Judah are destroyed: a combination which points to the time of Jeremiah, yet is unsuitable in the mouth of that prophet, who, at the very time when he is supposed to have written this psalm, foretold the destruction of Zion. On the other hand, the wish that God may build the cities of Judah, complete and secure them, and grant them for a permanent possession to His people, is one which befits a patriotic king, and may without incongruity be assigned to David. Cf. note on Ps. li. 18.

PSALM LXX.

This is taken with little variation from Ps. xl., 13th and following verses. The name Elohim is substituted in most places, but not throughout, for Jehovah. The inscription describes it as a psalm "to bring to remembrance," from which it may perhaps be inferred that it was used by the Psalmist when he brought a legal meat-offering to the altar. It is quite uncertain whether this psalm was separated from the context and arranged for liturgical use by David, or by a later composer.

PSALM LXXI.

This psalm has no inscription, but in the Septuagint version it has the title, "A psalm of David, of the sons of Jonadab, and of those who were first led captive." This probably means that it was composed by David, but used as especially suitable to their own condition by the Rechabites, and by the Jews of the captivity. It is full of reminiscences, or direct quotations of other psalms, especially the 22nd, 35th, and 40th, and is supposed to have been a compilation by a later writer. The date and authorship are wholly uncertain. It consists of two parts. In the first (1—11), the author prays for deliverance, and describes

2 Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

3 †Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou *art* my rock and my fortress.

† Heb. *Be thou to me for a rock of habitation.*

4 Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

5 For thou *art* my hope, O Lord God: *thou art* my trust from my youth.

6 By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise *shall be* continually of thee.

7 I am as a wonder unto many; but thou *art* my strong refuge.

8 Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praise *and with* thy honour all the day.

9 Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.

10 For mine enemies speak against me; and they that †lay wait for my soul take counsel together,

† Heb. *watch*, or, *observe.*

11 Saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for *there is* none to deliver *him*.

12 O God, be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help.

13 Let them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

14 But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

15 My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers *thereof*.

16 I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.

17 O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

18 Now also †when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed †thy strength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that* is to come.

† Heb. *unto old age and grey hairs.*
† Heb. *thine arm.*

19 Thy righteousness also, O God, *is* very high, who hast done great

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his sufferings and his hopes grounded on past mercies, in the second (12—24), he promises thanksgiving and praise for the triumph over his enemies which he confidently anticipates as the result of his prayers.

1—3. Compare these verses with the commencement of Ps. xxxi., 1—3.

3. *my strong habitation*] Or, as marg., **a rock of habitation**, *i.e.* a stronghold on a rock. The figure is common in the Davidic psalms. Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 27.

5. *my hope*] Compare Jer. xiv. 8, xvii. 13, l. 7, and 1 Tim. i. 1; Col. i. 27.

6. *have I been holden up*] Compare Ps. xxii. 10. There the Psalmist represents himself as cast upon God, here as sustained by Him from first to last.

out of my mother's bowels] Ps. xxii. 9.

7. *a wonder*] An object of marvel, a portent, as some suppose, because he had been marvellously protected and delivered; but as others, more in accordance with the context, explain the word, a marvellous example of God's punishments. Thus Job was looked upon by his friends. See also Isai. viii. 18; Zech. iii. 8.

9. *of old age*] This leaves no doubt that the Psalmist was growing old. See too *v.* 18. The latter years of David's life were prosperous, but visited by an affliction severe enough to give occasion to these lamentations: see 2 S. xxiv.

12, 13. These verses are apparently adaptations from other psalms, sc. xxii., xxxv., xxxviii. and lx.

15. *thy righteousness*] The attribute on which all hope of salvation depends. God's righteousness is the pledge not only of His accepting the righteous, but of His adherence to His promises of mercy and forgiveness to penitents.

16. *of thine only*] As the only ground of justification.

18. *when I am old and greyheaded*] Or, **near to old age and grey hairs.** The Psalmist is on the verge of old age, but not yet arrived at it.

things: O God, who *is* like unto thee!

20 *Thou*, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

21 Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

22 I will also praise thee †with the psaltery, *even* thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.

† Heb. *with the instrument of psaltery.*

23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

PSALM LXXII.

1 *David, praying for Solomon, sheweth the goodness and glory of his, in type, and in truth, of Christ's kingdom.* 18 *He blesseth God.*

A Psalm ‖for Solomon.

‖ Or, *of.*

GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

2 He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

3 The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

4 He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

5 They shall fear thee as long as

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thy strength] Or, "Thy arm." the manifestation or putting forth of the divine power.

19. *who is like unto thee!*] The motto of the Maccabees. Compare also Ps. lxxxix. 6, 8.

22. *with the psaltery*] Literally, "with an instrument of a lute," a periphrasis which may perhaps indicate a later age than David's.

Holy One of Israel] A name of God very often used by Isaiah, but which occurs twice only in the psalms. Jeremiah also uses it twice.

PSALM LXXII.

This psalm is attributed in the inscription to Solomon; and it bears strong indications of his authorship: the style resembles that of the Proverbs, and is different from the Davidic psalms: the allusions to distant lands, to an extended and peaceful dominion, and a certain air of calm and cheerful reflection, are characteristic of the son of David. It was probably composed early in the king's reign for liturgical recitation, a form in which the people might give expression to loyal and devout aspirations, connected with the head of the Theocratic kingdom. Hence the Messianic tone which pervades the whole: the author felt himself to be the representative of the ideal and future Messiah; his prayers and hopes reach far beyond his own sphere; they are fulfilled only in Christ. This psalm is thus the culminating point of that portion of Messianic prophecy which sets forth the kingly office of the Saviour. The Hebrews of Solomon's age may possibly not have distinguished between the type and the antitype, and may have expected a realization of the old national hopes in the person of one so richly gifted as their young, beautiful, wise, and prosperous king: but the Psalmist's spirit was under the control of a Power, which prompted utterances, in which the Church of all ages has found announcements of Christ.

for Solomon] Or, "of Solomon," literally, "to Solomon;" precisely the same form is used here as in the inscriptions of psalms assigned to David. It marks authorship.. See Ps. xlvi., inscription.

1. *the king*] The Targum, representing the old Hebrew tradition, renders this "the King Messiah."

thy righteousness] The righteousness, which belongs to the kingly office, is thus represented as a communication of the divine attribute. The Psalmist sees in the king's son the recipient and channel of all righteousness; hence the application to Christ.

the king's son] Solomon naturally lays stress on this point: the promises made to David had special reference to his son.

2. *He shall judge*, &c.] Cf. Isai. xi. 3, 4, xxxii. 1.

3. The mountains and hills represent the whole land, of which they are the most prominent objects. The whole country will overflow with the peace which is the result of righteousness.

4. Compare Job xxix. 12—17; Isai. xi. 4.

children of the needy] Cf. δυστήνων παῖδες, 'Il.' Φ. 151, a common idiom in Hebrew and Hellenistic Greek; see Cremer, 'Biblische Gräcität,' s. v. υἱός.

5. *fear thee*] Thee, that is, God. True religion will be the great and permanent result of righteous government.

the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers *that* water the earth.

7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace †so long as the moon endureth.

† Heb. *till* there be *no moon*.

8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

15 And he shall live, and to him †shall be given of the gold of Sheba:

† Heb. one shall give.

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as long, &c.] Literally, "with the sun and before the moon," but our A.V. gives the true sense. Cf. Luke i. 33.

6. *like rain*] Solomon undoubtedly refers to, and adopts, his father's description of the righteous ruler. See 2 S. xxiii. 4. Compare Hos. vi. 3.

mown grass] This is undoubtedly correct; cf. Amos vii. 1; the Prayer-book, "fleece," follows the old versions.

7. *so long as the moon endureth*] Lit. as in marg. **till the moon be no more.** Cf. Job xiv. 12. This passage is important as shewing that the idea of a King whose reign should last to the end of time was distinctly present to the Psalmist's mind. It determines the Messianic character of the whole composition. Cf. Isai. ii. 4.

8. The kingdom was to be universal, extending to the ends of the earth. The extension of the Israelitish realm under David and Solomon was sufficient to suggest the hope, and might be regarded by the Psalmist as a pledge of its realization, but taken in connection with the preceding verses this declaration is strictly Messianic.

from the river] *i.e.* the Euphrates. The sovereignty of Solomon over tributary peoples extended to the Euphrates; but that limit was but the commencement of the dominion which the ideal King would exercise over the whole world. Cf. Ps. ii. 8, cx. 2.

10. Tarshish and the isles represent the west, of which vague but impressive accounts were brought to Palestine by the Phœnicians, whose commerce at that time extended to the south-west of England. Sheba, in Arabia, and Seba (*i.e.* Meroe, according to Josephus, 'Antt.' II. x. 2), represent the nations of Asia and Africa. Cf. 1 K. x. 1, and note on Gen. x. 7.

offer gifts] Not merely in token of friendship, but of subjection: all powers of the earth will be tributary to the King.

12. *For*] The connection of thought is observable. The extension of the King's dominion is the result not of military force, but of moral influence; all nations will be won by the righteousness of His sway, more especially by His care for the poor and afflicted. See Drechsler on Isai. ix. 7. This is important as shewing how completely Jewish anticipations of the Messianic epoch are opposed to the plain statements of Hebrew prophecy.

when he crieth] sc. for help. Job xxix. 12, where both clauses occur.

the poor also, and him] Or, **and the poor who hath no helper.** Thus LXX., Vulg., and Jerome. Job l. c. has "the orphan, who hath no helper."

13. *the poor and needy*] Or, **the weak and needy.**

14. *deceit*] Ps. xxxvi. 3; here fraud and extortion are specially meant.

precious shall their blood, &c.] 1 S. xxvi. 21; 2 K. i. 13. As King He will be merciful and just; as Saviour He will redeem them with His own precious blood.

15. *he shall live*] It is questioned who is the subject of this and the following clauses. The words rendered literally are, "And he shall live, and he shall give to Him of the gold of Saba, and he shall pray for Him continually, and shall bless Him every day." On the whole it seems most natural to take the man who has been delivered by the righteousness of the King as the subject of the sentence. His life is saved, and in grateful acknowledgment he brings costly gifts "of the gold of Sheba," prays for the King's prosperity, and blesses His name unceasingly. To

prayer also shall be made for him continually; *and* daily shall he be praised.

16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

17 His name †shall endure for ever: †his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and *men* shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

18 Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

19 And blessed *be* his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and Amen.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

† Heb. *shall be.*
† Heb. *shall be as a son to continue his father's name for ever.*

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this explanation, which Hupfeld holds to be the only one grammatically admissible, there is the obvious objection that the "poor man" would not offer gold of Sheba; rich offerings, however, would naturally be made by subjects saved from oppression. Dr Kay renders, "and He shall live: and one shall give to Him of Sheba's gold; and He shall make intercession continually for him, all day long shall he bless Him." But though it is quite possible that different subjects may be supplied for the separate clauses, the changes in this rendering appear somewhat abrupt.

16. *There shall be*, &c.] Or, **May there be abundance of corn in the land, on the top of mountains.** "Handful" in the A.V. follows a Hebrew tradition; but the meaning "abundance" given by the Syriac, and supported by Heb., Chald., and Arabic usage, is accepted by modern critics, and is better adapted to the context. The LXX. στήριγμα is not easily accounted for. Symm. ἴχνος τροφῆς.

mountains] See *v.* 3. There are traces of cultivation extending up the terraced sides to the summit of the mountains of Palestine—a well-known evidence of former prosperity. Cf. 2 S. i. 21.

the fruit thereof] The ripened corn on the heights will rustle in the wind like the foliage on Lebanon. "Shake" or "rustle" is preferable to "wave;" the word denotes movement and sound.

like grass] A different word meaning grass is used *v.* 6; the Hebrew word in this passage includes all herbs. Cf. Job v. 25. On the rapid increase of a regenerate people in Messianic times, see Ps. cx. 3; Isai. ix. 3, xlix. 20.

17. *His name shall endure*] Or, "May His name be for ever." This is at once a prayer and a prophecy. Cf. Ps. lxxxi. 15, lxxxix. 36.

his name] Or, "may His name be renewed so long as the sun shineth." The Hebrew word for "renewed" occurs only in this passage, but the meaning is not disputed: His name will produce a new progeny, will be continued by every renewed race. See Note below.

and men shall be blessed] Cf. Gen. xxii. 18, xxvi. 4. Lit. shall bless themselves. This implies a consciousness and recognition of the blessing. It is more, as Dr Kay observes, than "be blessed," in Gen. xii. 3, xxvi. 4.

all nations] Luke i. 48.

18, 19. See Ps. xli. 13.

18. *who only doeth wondrous things*] See Job v. 9.

20. This verse marks the close of the collection, which contains at least sixty psalms ascribed to David, and probably bore as a formal designation, "The Prayers of David." In the next book one psalm only is assigned to David. The title David the son of Jesse recalls the last words of David, 2 S. xxiii. 1; it was evidently here, as in that passage, assumed by the king himself, both in memory of his comparatively humble origin, and of the meaning of the name Jesse, or Yishai.

NOTE on PSALM LXXII. 17.

N.B. The Cethib (ינין, yanin) is preferable to the Keri (ינון, yinnon). It is noticeable that the Rabbins took "Yinnon" to be a proper name. "Why shall Messiah be called Yinnon? Because He shall raise those who sleep in the earth," see 'Midrash Mishle,' f. 53, 3, quoted by Sepp. 'Leben Jesu,' Vol. VI. p. 517. They rightly apprehended the meaning of regeneration involved in the word, applying it, however, not to the creation of a new people, but to the resurrection, which our Lord calls "the regeneration," παλιγγενεσία, Matt. xix. 28.

PSALM LXXIII.

1 *The prophet, prevailing in a temptation,* 2 *sheweth the occasion thereof, the prosperity of the wicked.* 13 *The wound given thereby, diffidence.* 15 *The victory over it, knowledge of God's purpose, in destroying of the wicked, and sustaining the righteous.*

† A Psalm of Asaph.

† Or, *A Psalm for Asaph.*
† Or, *Yet.*
† Heb. *clean of heart.*

‡ TRULY God *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are †of a clean heart.

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

3 [a] For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

[a] Job 21. 7. Ps. 37. 1. Jer. 12. 1.

4 For *there are* no bands in their death: but their strength *is* †firm.

† Heb. *fat.*

5 They *are* not †in trouble *as other* men; neither are they plagued †like *other* men.

† Heb. *in the trouble of other men.*
† Heb. *with.*

THIRD BOOK. PSALMS LXXIII.—LXXXIX.

The psalms in this book differ in some important points from the preceding. Eleven are attributed to Asaph, four to the sons of Korah, one to Ethan, and one only to David. Their character is for the most part didactic, grave, solemn, and sententious. They are pervaded by a deep feeling of melancholy, relieved however by flashes of spiritual hope; containing at once the most harrowing descriptions of national calamities, and the clearest anticipations of a futurity of blessedness. It is observable that from the forty-second to the eighty-fourth psalms the name Elohim is used almost exclusively. This is conclusive against the assumption that such an usage indicates an early date, for these psalms, with very few exceptions, belong to the post-Davidic period, and are even assigned in part by some critics to a far later age.

PSALM LXXIII.

This psalm may have been composed by Asaph, the contemporary of David, but the name appears to have been borne by some of his descendants. The indications of date are uncertain. The progress or triumph of ungodliness is a feature common to every age, nor are the complaints stronger than those found in the psalms of David. The apostasy of which the Psalmist speaks is rather moral than ceremonial; the unbelief rather of practical atheism than of heathenish superstition. The sanctuary is still standing (17), the Psalmist goes there for instruction and comfort. The belief in a future retribution is definite (24), not like that of Job, a strong aspiration, or even subjective conviction, but based on the divine promise. The language is archaic, and the style somewhat obscure, resembling to some extent the book of Job, with which the author was evidently familiar. Upon the whole it appears most probable that we have here a product of the Solomonian age, written at a season when a turbulent and corrupt nobility had the upper hand, and vicious habits were taking deep root in the nation. A few years before the death of Solomon, or the period immediately following the accession of his son, would supply abundant materials for such reflections.

A Psalm of Asaph] Literally, "to or for Asaph," as in the margin; but the word generally denotes authorship. See note on title of Ps. lxxii.

1. *Truly*] Or, **Verily**, as in *v.* 13. The word so rendered indicates the result of a mental struggle, it speaks of doubts satisfied, and obstinate questionings silenced. Dr Kay has "only;" but scarcely in accordance with English usage.

even to such as are of a clean heart] Or, **to the pure in heart.** Thus our Lord, "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." God reveals His goodness on this condition. Sin is the mist which intercepts the light and warmth of His presence. Cf. Ps. xxiv. 4.

2. *well nigh*] An admirable description of the effects of evil influence. The Psalmist is like a man standing on slippery ground, and scarcely able to retain his footing against a rushing stream: all but borne along by the current of popular opinion.

3. *envious*] The cardinal temptation. Cf. Job xxi. 7, where the feeling is brought out with its results.

the foolish] The word implies empty boasting, fools exulting in their impiety. See note on Ps. v. 5. Dr Kay has "boastful."

the prosperity] Literally, "the peace." The great trial was to see the boastfulness of the wicked apparently justified by their security and success.

4. *no bands*] This is generally understood to mean, the wicked go through no severe struggles, mental or bodily, in their death; they die easily, without fear or pain. Thus Job xxi. 13, "they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave," and *v.* 23, "in full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet." The word occurs elsewhere only in Isai. lviii. 6. This indeed is the natural and obvious sense; but late commentators (Delitzsch, Hupfeld, &c.) object that the Psalmist would hardly begin with the death of the wicked, and they therefore suggest other renderings, such as, the wicked have no pains or affliction until their death, or not such as cause death: the objection, however, seems to

6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them *as* a garment.

7 Their eyes stand out with fatness: †they have more than heart could wish.

8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression: they speak loftily.

9 They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them.

11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

12 Behold, these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches.

13 Verily I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

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have little weight; of all trials to the observer that of a peaceful, fearless death ending a life of wickedness is the severest. It has probably caused more fallings away than any other, and would naturally present itself first to the Psalmist's spirit. See Note below.

their strength is firm] Literally, "fat," as in the margin, but "firm" expresses the real meaning: their body is sound, unbroken by disease or suffering to the very hour of death. We have "the rich man" of the parable faring sumptuously, till surprised by sudden and painless death. The word rendered "strength" occurs only in this passage. Ges. s. v. renders it "body."

5. *They are not in trouble*, &c.] Or, **They have no part in the trouble of men, nor are they plagued with other men.** Even in times of national calamities and visitations they seem exempt; famine and disease carry off the poor, while the rich oppressor is living in luxury. This points to a period of general suffering, not however of foreign invasion, when the rich are the chief losers, but rather to such a period as that described by Amos vi. 1—6, and Isai. ii. 7; such as probably preceded the death of Solomon, when the people were well-nigh exhausted by exactions, which brought about the revolution after his death.

6. *a chain*] The gold chain, indicating the rank of the noble, and symbolizing his pride. The original is far more striking, but quite untranslateable. Pride, so to speak, *necks* them, covers their neck, gives it stiffness, clings to it as a chain of massive gold.

garment] The long flowing robe bright with gorgeous colours and embroidery is an apt symbol of the luxurious nobility living on the spoils of an oppressed and plundered people. Cf. Ps. cix. 18.

7. *stand out with fatness*] It is strange that an image so striking and so true should have been meddled with—the projecting eye of the full-fed oppressor completes the picture. Cf. Job xv. 27; Ps. xvii. 10.

they have more than heart could wish] Or, **the imaginations of their heart overflow,** *i. e.* all their words express without restraint or shame the inward imaginings of hearts full of wickedness. Thus Hupfeld and nearly all modern critics. The word rendered "imaginations" is used of figures painted or carved on walls, especially of heathen temples (cf. Lev. xxvi. 1; Ezek. viii. 12); "idolatrous fancies" would express the true sense.

8. This verse explains the preceding sentence. It may be rendered, **They sneer, and speak wickedly of oppression; they speak haughtily,** lit. "from a height." There is no disguise, no hypocrisy, no shame or fear; what they think they say, they exult in their crimes: they see in them proofs of nobility, of superiority to men.

9. The boasting has two objects; against heaven it takes the form of blasphemy, against man that of threatening or calumny: "the walking through the earth" is a phrase especially used of calumny; the wicked, like Satan (see Job i. 7), go to and fro inventing and propagating slanders. Perowne says, "not *against* but *in* the heavens," but Hupfeld shews that the rendering "against," which is that of all ancient, and most modern, commentators, is probably correct.

10. Or, **Therefore his (or my) people turn hither, and full waters are swallowed by them.** The meaning of this striking, but somewhat obscure, passage appears to be, the people, corrupted by their example and boasts, run after them and imbibe all their principles without hesitation. The figure of drinking iniquity like water is found in Job xv. 16. Thus we read of drinking shame, suffering, and death. See Note below.

11. The result is open and avowed disbelief in God's providence. The success of wickedness, if permanent as they hold it to be, is incompatible with faith in His knowledge and power. Cf. Job xxi. 13.

12. *Behold*] This verse expresses the result of mere outward observation. **Behold these are wicked, and (yet) prosperous**

14 For all the day long have I been plagued, and † chastened every morning.

† Heb. *my chastisement was.*

15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children.

16 When I thought to know this, † it *was* too painful for me;

† Heb. *it was labour in mine eyes.*

17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I their end.

18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

19 How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

20 As a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

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for ever, they increase in strength. The Psalmist is supposed to be quoting another's words; but he is evidently expressing his own former feelings, and presents the problem broadly, without reserve, nearly in the same words as, and entirely in the same spirit which breathes in, the book of Job. On the one side a godless race of nobles, rich, strong, without shame, remorse, or misgiving, surrounded by abject followers; on the other, innocence, not only unrequited, but suffering afflictions, such as throughout the Old Testament are especially attributed to divine wrath.

14. *plagued*] See *v.* 5.

15. *I will speak thus*] Or, "I will tell it out thus," openly declare that such is the real state of things in the world. There are two stages of indignation, the inner feeling, and the outward expression; from the latter the Psalmist is preserved by his consciousness of the ill effects which it would produce; it would be treachery to God's people. See Note below.

offend] The word, if taken in the New Testament sense of putting a stumblingblock or temptation in the way, gives the substantial meaning of the original, which, however, may be more closely rendered "I should have betrayed," "dealt unfaithfully with."

16. *When I thought*] The word indicates a process of meditation; the Psalmist first tried to discover a rational account of the anomalies in the world's government, but the attempt resulted in nothing but confusion and trouble. Like Job and his friends, he could arrive at no conclusion.

too painful] Or, "grievous," in the twofold sense of painful and hurtful, leading to sinful as well as melancholy thoughts, such for instance as were entertained by Job, and not overcome without a divine revelation. The word is rendered "travail," and "vanity," in Eccles. iv. 4.

17. *into the sanctuary of God*] The translation is quite correct, though in the original the word is plural, "the sanctuaries of God." There in "the calmness of the sacred courts" (Kay), and in answer to prayer, the Psalmist found the solution which no effort of thought could attain: he evidently speaks of an inward, subjective movement of consciousness, but one prompted by God's Spirit.

then understood I their end] This does not exactly mean the termination of their life, but, as the word literally signifies, their after destiny, their ultimate portion. Up to the end of their life, as he points out in the first place (*v.* 4), they are supposed to be prosperous. Cf. Prov. xxiii. 17, 18. The retribution must therefore be after death, or not at all. In the three following verses five points are enumerated, in which the Psalmist finds a proof of divine judgment.

18. *slippery places*] Their position is utterly insecure, "they seem to stand, but have no hold." Cf. Ps. xxxv. 6.

destruction] When they fall, their ruin is absolute, without hope of recovery, Ps. lxxiv. 3.

19. *in a moment*] Their ruin is sudden, comes on them without warning; this touches the complaint that "they have no bands in their death."

consumed with terrors] The terrors are not mere alarms, with the horror comes destruction. The word occurs very frequently in Job, sc. xviii. 11, xxiv. 17, xxvii. 20, xxx. 15.

20. *when thou awakest*] Or, **arisest.** This translation is adopted by nearly all critics (see Note below): God's arising refers of course to the manifestation of His justice; cf. Ps. lxxviii. 65.

their image] A fine expression, denoting the unsubstantial character of that outward show which had disturbed the Psalmist; the word is especially applied to idols, and probably means a shadowy form.

Strictly speaking, all these points describe simply the destruction, death and ruin of the guilty; but they involve the thought that there is an absolute difference between their fate and that of the righteous; and inasmuch as that difference cannot consist merely in the termination of existence, however sudden and terrible, since it is but the common fate of all, and in evil times most frequently that of the patriot and martyr, it must needs refer to the state after death. In the Old Testament we have no distinct notice of a futurity of agony appointed to the wicked,

21 Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

22 So foolish *was* I, and †ignorant: I was *as* a beast †before thee.

23 Nevertheless I *am* continually with thee: thou hast holden *me* by my right hand.

24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven *but* thee? and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee.

26 My flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the †strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

28 But *it is* good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

†Heb. *knew not.* †Heb. *with thee.* †Heb. *rock.*

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but we have here a vision of hopelessness, horror, and contempt. The last expression suggests the thought afterwards developed in Dan. xii. 2. The word "image" implies a continued, though unsubstantial, existence; the form of the man will remain, though, divested of all that disguised its misery and corruption, it will be an object of "everlasting contempt." A future judgment with everlasting issues, if not declared, is implicitly contained, in this passage.

21, 22. The Psalmist now reviews and condemns his hasty thoughts; the connection of thought is rather obscure in our A.V. The translation should run thus: **When my heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins, then I was foolish and ignorant, I was a brute before Thee.** The word "was grieved" is very forcible, was in a state of ferment, of diseased excitement, and disturbance: "was pricked," pierced as with the sharp fang of an adder. The position is not precisely the same as that of Job, for the Psalmist gets to a conclusion, which substantially clears up the difficulty, without an outward revelation.

23. The state of the righteous in its contrast. He is with God continually, and therefore in no real danger; God holds him up, so that *he* cannot slip; through life he is guided and then received into glory. This last expression involves far more than temporal prosperity, which it is scarcely probable that the Psalmist expected, and which certainly would be no adequate compensation for undeserved affliction; the glory must be the manifestation of that abiding Presence, which even here sustains, preserves and guides the faithful.

24. The ground of hope is present faith. The Psalmist has but one object in heaven or earth: giving his heart wholly to God, he has Him wholly as his portion. The beauty of Watts's paraphrase is remarked by Delitzsch, "Were I in heaven without my God, 'Twould be no joy to me; And while this earth is mine abode, I long for none but Thee." See note on Ps. xvi. 2.

26. This verse contains a strong assertion of personal immortality; given the destruction of the flesh, even of the heart, the body with all its powers, the heart with all its faculties and endowments, yet the destruction is but seeming, at the most temporary, for God will preserve or restore that nature in which personality and perpetuity of consciousness consist, and He will be the portion of the believer for ever. All after-revelations could but confirm and justify this clear anticipation. Annihilation of consciousness was a thought inconceivable to him who held it.

28. *But it is good for me*] Or, as Dr Kay well renders it, **And as for me, nearness to God is my good.** "Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee." The Vulg., following LXX., has mihi autem adhærere Deo bonum est.

The characteristic of the wicked is separation from God, which can have but one result, absolute destruction; that of the faithful is union with Him, which secures all good in time and eternity; imposing one permanent duty, that of declaring His works.

The sum-total amounts to this; the prosperity of the wicked may, or may not, last till death, but it is a mere phantom, ending here in nothingness, and followed by everlasting shame; the life of the righteous is a journey under sure guidance, lighted by God's presence, and issuing in glory, with an entire fruition of blessedness for ever.

NOTES on PSALM LXXIII. 4, 10, 15, and 20.

4. למותם means properly "at their death:" not "until," as some would render it. This Drechsler, quoted by Perowne, 2nd edit., shews to be the true sense of ל in reference to time. The word חרצבות was evidently not understood by the ancients. LXX. have ἀνάνευσις, sc. escape, which perverts the sense, and may imply a different reading, perhaps

תוצאות, as in Ps. lxviii. 21, where A.V. "issues from death." This reading might also account for the Syr. ܡܦܩܐ "end," sc. exitus. Jerome and Sym. had a different reading. Aquila, however, renders it δυσπάθειαι. Our A.V. is correct.

10. For עמו, the LXX. have ὁ λαός μου, and עמי is probably the true reading. Thus Syr., Vulg., and the Arab., Æth. and Coptic translations of the LXX. מי מלא is an unusual expression: Hupfeld takes מלא to be an abstract noun, "fulness." ימצו is derived not from מצא, "to find," but from מצה=מצץ, "to swallow." Dr Kay adopts the Cethib ישיב instead of the Keri ישוב; but the latter is supported by LXX., Vulg., Syr.

15. Hupf. objects to אם before "I said." Perowne suggests, "if (said I) I should speak thus." In the second clause כמו appears, as Hupfeld thinks, to be taken as an adverb. LXX., Vulg., οὕτως, sic.

20. Second clause בעיר: the old versions, the Rabbins, and some modern critics take עיר to mean city; but the word evidently corresponds to הקיץ in the previous clause; differing from it perhaps in the energy of action. A man wakes, God rouses Himself, *i.e.* puts forth His power.

PSALM LXXIV.

1 *The prophet complaineth of the desolation of the sanctuary.* 10 *He moveth God to help in consideration of his power,* 18 *of his reproachful enemies, of his children, and of his covenant.*

[1] Maschil of Asaph.

[1] Or, A Psalm *for Asaph to give instruction.*

O GOD, why hast thou cast *us* off for ever? *why* doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?

2 Remember thy congregation, *which* thou hast purchased of old;

Psalm LXXIV.

This psalm is closely connected with the seventy-ninth, and appears to have been composed at the same time, with reference to the same events. The external circumstances of the nation are described with a completeness which might seem to leave little room for doubt as to the date. Commentators, however, are at issue, some assigning it to the period of the Chaldean invasion, others to the time of the Maccabees. An examination of the internal evidence brings out considerable difficulties connected with each of these views; more especially the latter. A third supposition, to which the writer would call the attention of readers, seems to be less open to objection, and to meet the conditions of the exegesis. The invasion of Palestine by Shishak in the reign of Rehoboam is described very briefly in 1 K. xiv. 25, 26, and 2 Chro. xii. 2—9; but from those passages we learn that "he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house; he took away all." The extent of that invasion, and its duration, are illustrated by the inscription on the south wall of the temple of Karnak, which Shishak set up on his return. The king is represented in the act of dragging by the hair a band of captured enemies to the feet of Amon Ra, the tutelary god, to whom he attributes his victory. In his right hand he wields the Egyptian sword or battle-axe, with a menacing gesture as though he would destroy the prisoners with a blow. The names of the places, amounting to 133, which he had captured, are inscribed in mural rings. Many of these are identified with cities in Palestine, and among them are some which were fortified by Rehoboam (see 2 Chro. xi. 5—10), *e.g.* Shoco, Adullam, Adoraim, Ajalon, and several Levitical cities, including Gibeon, "the great high place," where Solomon had offered up a thousand burnt-offerings on the altar; where also the Lord appeared to Solomon, and assured him of the fulfilment of all his wishes; see 1 K. iii. 4, 5—15. That such an invasion should not be noticed by any of the Psalmists seems improbable; and, as will be shewn, the expressions used in this psalm are suitable to the transactions which must have accompanied it. Some weight is also to be attached to the position of the psalm in the collection, among other compositions of Asaph, which belong to the period extending from the latter part of Solomon's reign nearly to the time of Asa. It is not easy to account for its introduction here on the supposition that it belongs to the time of the Babylonish captivity, or to that of the Maccabees.

The structure, like that of other psalms attributed to the elder Asaph, is highly artistic. It begins and ends with strophes of one verse each; the other strophes come in this order:

2, 4, 2, 3, 1, 3, 2, 4, 2

the middle verse 10 stands alone.

Maschil] See note on Ps. xxxii.

1. *why...for ever*] Two questions are combined, why God should have cast off His people? whether it is for ever? For ever, see *v.* 10. The Psalmist fears, but does not assert, that the desolation will be perpetual.

the sheep of thy pasture] An expression common in the psalms of Asaph; see lxxvii. 20, lxxviii. 52, lxxix. 13. The "sure mercies of David," see lxxviii. 70—72, seemed to

the [1]rod of thine inheritance, *which* thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

3 Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; *even* all *that* the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

4 Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns *for* signs.

5 *A man* was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

6 But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.

7 [†]They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled *by casting down* the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

† Heb. *They have sent thy sanctuary into the fire.*

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be withdrawn. There may be a reference to the time when God led His people like sheep (out of Egypt) by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

2. Three points are given which have a special suitableness in the case of the Egyptian invasion: the purchase, or rather the acquisition, of the congregation, see Exod. xv. 16, where the same word is used; the special redemption of the tribe of Judah (Gen. xlix. 8—10); and the choice of Mount Zion for God's dwelling; all announced in the Pentateuch. It is evident that this clause could not have been written at the time of the exile: the Psalmist speaks as an eye-witness, and as an inhabitant of Zion—*this* mount Zion.

3. *Lift up thy feet*, &c.] The meaning of this clause would seem to be that God is intreated to stand as a deliverer, or restorer, upon the ruins, which but for His interposition would be perpetual. This undoubtedly implies that buildings connected with the temple had been overthrown: but the havoc, though great, did not amount to a total destruction. The terms are stronger than can be justified by the notices of damage in the time of the Maccabees, and hardly strong enough for the total destruction of the temple by the Chaldees. That Shishak, who both as belonging to a family of priests (see Brugsch, 'Histoire d'Égypte,' p. 221), and as the ally of Jeroboam (see 1 K. xi. 40), would feel a special enmity to the sanctuary of Judah, and have committed great havoc when he *plundered* the temple, is highly probable: it accords with the practice of the Egyptians, who mutilated the fanes of hostile deities; see Chabas, 'Voyage d'un Égyptien,' p. 176.

all that, &c.] This implies that the sanctuary was still standing, the evil was done *in* the sanctuary: see too the next verse.

4. *thy congregations*] Or, **Thy place of meeting**; it means specially the spot in which Jehovah promises to meet His people; that is the Holy Precinct between the tabernacle and the altar: see note on Exod. xxix. 43. The reading of MSS. varies here between the singular and plural; the former has best authority, but the sense is substantially unaltered whichever is preferred.

their ensigns for signs] The Hebrew repeats the same word: **their** *own* **signs for signs**; the meaning is questioned: but the word signs undoubtedly signifies "standards" in Num. ii. 2 ff., and is probably here taken in that sense. The enemies set up their standards as symbols of their religion; see Ges. 'Thes.' p. 40 s.v. § 2. This might of course be applied to the time of Antiochus, see 1 Macc. i. 30—59, or to the Chaldees; but it is equally probable in the case of Shishak.

5. *A man was famous*] The verse is obscure, but it may be rendered, as by Dr Kay, "Each man was seen as if plying aloft hatchets in a copse of wood." In all probability it denotes the wild, fierce gestures of men cutting down the woodwork of the temple, either in wanton devastation, or, more probably, in order to carry off the golden decorations.

6. *But now*] Or, **And now they batter down the carvings thereof altogether with hatchets and hammers.** So total a devastation of the sanctuary is not intimated in connection with the Syrians. It would scarcely be dwelt upon in the account of the conflagration by Chaldees. The thorough mutilation of figures, inscriptions and decorations is characteristic of Egyptians. It is somewhat remarkable that the word rendered "hammers" occurs in old Egyptian, "karabu," or "kalaphu," Heb. "kalaph." Brugsch ('D. H.' s.v.) notices the identity of the root, though without reference to this passage.

7. *They have cast fire into thy sanctuary*] The expression in the Hebrew is peculiar, see marg. Had a total destruction by fire been meant the usual form would be "they have burnt with fire." It certainly denotes the burning either of a part of the sanctuary, or of consecrated things. The word, which is plural, may mean the temple, but it is applied to "the sanctuaries of Israel," Lev. xxvi. 31; including such places as Gibeon, see 1 K. iii. 5: and also to "holy things," see Num. iv. 19, 20. "They have cast Thy holy things into the fire on the ground," is probably the true meaning of this clause. It is evidently spoken by an eye-witness.

they have defiled, &c.] If we accept the Ma-

8 They said in their hearts, Let us †destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.

† Heb. *break.*

9 We see not our signs: *there is* no more any prophet: neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

10 O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

11 Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck *it* out of thy bosom.

12 For God *is* my King of old,

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soretic punctuation the meaning may be correctly expressed by the A.V. It implies that the Holy of Holies was actually overthrown. This is quite incompatible with Syrian proceedings: very improbable in the case of Egyptians, unless indeed it were understood of the high place at Gibeon which they captured. But the LXX. connect the words "to the ground" with the preceding clause; a far more natural construction, giving the result that the holy things were cast into the fire upon the ground, of course in the courts of the temple; thus causing a defilement of the dwelling-place of Jehovah.

8. The great difficulty of reconciling this verse either with the Syrian or Chaldean devastations is felt by all interpreters. The words seem to imply an intention, not an actual fulfilment, such as was wrought by the Chaldees. The word rendered "synagogues" is the same which occurs in *v.* 4, *i.e.* places of meeting the Lord. No notice of synagogues in or out of Jerusalem is found before the captivity; no certain notice in the time of the Maccabees. It is, however, certain that "holy places," consecrated by ancient associations, and not condemned by God's law so long or so far as they were used aright, existed in various parts of Palestine, the most striking instance being that of Gibeon: see the preceding note. That the Egyptians actually besieged and captured more than one of these places is testified by the contemporaneous inscription at Thebes; that they burnt or devastated them is more than probable, see note on *v.* 3. This may therefore be regarded as a fair explanation of the passage. It is to be observed that the term there used would certainly not have been applied to any such places after the time of Hezekiah, by whom they were altogether abolished (2 K. xviii. 4, where see note), partly doubtless because of superstitious practices which had grown up around them, partly because they interfered with the supremacy of the temple at Jerusalem, and endangered the spiritual unity of the nation. Again it is certain that this term was not applied at any period to the places of worship, which may have been established under the Maccabees. The word synagogue is equivalent to the common Hebrew designation *beit bak-keneseth* (בית הכנסת), more rarely *beit vaed* (בית וועד), both meaning place, or house, of assembly, but not of a covenanted meeting with Jehovah. That Asaph, the later contemporary of Solomon, should have used it of Gibeon, or other holy places, or rather should have put it into the mouth of foreign invaders, is natural and probable. Compare the words of Rabshakeh, 2 K. xviii. 22.

9. *We see not our signs*] The reference to *v.* 4 is obvious. Instead of their own signs, whether standards (as in Num. ii.) or sacred emblems, the Israelites see those of triumphant enemies. This cannot apply to the period of the Maccabees, whose standards were raised at the beginning of their revolt. It is well suited to the state of the people after the capture of Jerusalem by Chaldees or Egyptians.

there is no more any prophet, &c.] The complaint may imply either a total cessation of prophets, or, according to a common Hebrew idiom, the withholding of a special communication declaring "how long" the infliction should last. The former alternative seems scarcely admissible: even under the Maccabees the coming of a prophet was regarded as by no means improbable (see 1 Macc. iv. 46, a passage which also shews that the altar was profaned by Antiochus, but "*pulled down*" by the pious Israelites); at the time of the Chaldean invasion at least two great prophets, Ezekiel and Jeremiah, gave distinct warnings both of the course and duration of the affliction; see Jer. xxv. 11, 12, xxix. 10; an argument, of which the full force is not removed by the words of Jeremiah at the time "her prophets also find no vision from the Lord," Lam. ii. 9, for his distinct prediction of the length and end of the captivity was first delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; see Jer. xxv. 1. The second alternative is more probable; the withholding for a season of the knowledge "how long" was a common feature of severe visitations. In the case of Judah under Rehoboam it was specially deserved, "because they had transgressed against the Lord," 1 K. xiv. 24, 25; 2 Chro. xii. 2. The want of knowledge was an appropriate chastisement for a king who had rejected wise counsels at the outset of his reign. It is also clear from *v.* 8 in Chronicles that the servitude was to last an indefinite time.

11. *pluck it out of thy bosom*] Lit. "Out of Thy bosom, make an end:" put forth Thy right hand and destroy by one blow.

working salvation in the midst of the earth.

13 [a] Thou didst † divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the † dragons in the waters.

14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, *and* gavest him *to be* meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

15 [b] Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: [c] thou driedst up † mighty rivers.

16 The day *is* thine, the night also *is* thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

17 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast † made summer and winter.

18 Remember this, *that* the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and *that* the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

19 O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude *of the wicked:* forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.

[a] Exod. 14. 21. † Heb. *brak.* † Or, *whales.* [b] Exod. 17. 5. Numb. 20. 11. [c] Josh. 3. 13. † Heb. *rivers of strength.* † Heb. *made them.*

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12. *my King of old*] Cf. Ps. xliv. 4. The reference to ancient mercies, never out of place, has a special suitableness, assuming the Egyptian invasion to be meant. It introduces a series of direct allusions to the discomfiture of Pharaoh in the Exodus.

in the midst of the earth] Thus Exod. viii. 22, "to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth."

13. *Thou didst divide*] Or, **Thou didst cleave**; lit. break; a violent action is described. Cf. Exod. xiv. 21, where a different word is used. The Psalmist is specially concerned with the suddenness and vehemence of the act.

dragons] Or, sea-monsters; the well-known symbols of Egypt: see note on Exod. vii. 9, where the *word* is shewn to have been used by the Egyptians. The reference is evidently to the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.

14. *leviathan*] That is, the crocodile; see Job xli. 1. The symbolical meaning is not questioned; as in Isai. xxvii. 1, it represents the Egyptian host, which was crushed by the divine power, and cast on the shores of the Red Sea. It is however to be observed that this application to Egypt is not found in the book of Job, where the leviathan symbolizes more generally the antagonistic powers of darkness, see note on Job iii. 8. There would be a peculiar suitableness in the application, if it were first made on the occasion of an Egyptian occupation of Jerusalem.

him] **them**; *i.e.* the heads of Egypt, Pharaoh and his captains.

to the people inhabiting the wilderness] On the construction, see Note below. The A.V. follows the old interpretation, which refers this to the Israelites; but in that case the expression "meat" is scarcely intelligible. Later commentators suppose dwellers in the wilderness to mean wild beasts, jackals, hyænas, &c., which devoured the carcases.

15. *Thou didst cleave*, &c.] Cf. Exod. xvii. 6; Num. xx. 11.

thou driedst up] Josh. iii. 13, &c.

The Psalmist thus rapidly goes through the whole history of the great deliverance, which he prays may be now repeated.

16. From the recapitulation of past mercies Asaph turns to the contemplation of God's power as Creator; and as such at once opposed to, and Lord over, all the agencies which the heathens, more especially the Egyptians, personified and worshipped.

the light and the sun] The first word means literally, as in Gen. i. 14, light-bearer; the word sun follows as the principal luminary. There is probably an allusion to the worship of the sun, which is thus declared to be a creature of God. In the 'Egyptian Ritual,' ch. XVII., Tum, the Sun-God, declares himself to be self-existent. The Targum takes the light-bearer to be the moon; thus too Hitzig. The LXX. have "the sun and the moon," which may indicate a different reading: but Sym. and Aq. have φωστῆρα καὶ ἥλιον.

18. *the foolish people*] The word is used specially of corrupt and ungodly sinners; see note on Job ii. 10.

19. *thy turtledove*] Song of Sol. ii. 14. The figure has a special suitableness in the mouth of one trained under Solomon. It favours the mystical or spiritual interpretation of that passage.

the multitude] In the next clause the same word is rendered "congregation." It may have the latter meaning, as in Ps. lxviii. 10. But two renderings, each requiring a slight change, are proposed. Hupfeld (transposing the prep. *to*), "Give not up to violence the life of Thy turtle-dove: forget not for ever the life of Thy poor." Dr Kay, "Give not over Thy turtle-dove to the herd of wild will." This needs only a change of punctuation. See Note below.

20 Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

21 O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

22 Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.

23 Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee † increaseth continually.

† Heb. *ascendeth.*

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20. *unto the covenant*] See Gen. xvii. 7, 8; the reference, suitable at all times of affliction, is peculiarly so when the Psalmist apprehends captivity, or loss of the possession of Canaan, given to the seed of Abraham for an everlasting possession.

the dark places] The word is specially used of Sheol, or Hell: cf. Ps. lxxxviii. 6; Lam. iii. 6; compare Job x. 21. In this passage it must mean the heathen land where the Israelites had been, or feared to be, in bondage. The reference to Egypt, the iron furnace, the house of spiritual darkness and physical misery, is obvious.

habitations of cruelty] Dr Kay, "homesteads of violence;" the latter word means specially "unjust violence," such as that of the Egyptian oppressors.

23. *increaseth continually*] **ascendeth,** as in marg.; it goes up to heaven calling for punishment. Cf. Gen. iv. 10, xviii. 20, and Exod. iii. 7—9.

NOTES on PSALM LXXIV. 14, 19.

14. לעם לציים. The construction is ungrammatical. Dr Kay renders, "for a people among the desert tribes," meaning thereby a prey for the jackals and hyænas, who claim the desert as their own. The LXX. and Vulg. λαοῖς τοῖς Αἰθίοψι, populis Æthiopum, which implies a different, but certainly corrupt, reading. Syr. has "to a strong people," which probably points to a true reading for לציים, sc. עצום.

19. It may be assumed as certain (1) that חית is stat. const., and must therefore be followed by a noun; (2) that it must have the same meaning in both clauses. Hence we have no alternative but either to read with Hupf. חית תורך, "the life of Thy turtle-dove," placing ל before נפש, sc. to greed, or bloodthirstiness; or, with Dr Kay, to take חית נפש together; "a tribe of greediness." The latter requires less change, and avoids the difficulty of taking נפש apart in the sense of greed.

PSALM LXXV.

1 *The prophet praiseth God.* 2 *He promiseth to judge uprightly.* 4 *He rebuketh the proud by consideration of God's providence.* 9 *He praiseth God, and promiseth to execute justice.*

To the chief Musician, ¹Al-taschith, A Psalm *or* Song ¹of Asaph.

¹ Or, *Destroy not.*
¹ Or, *for Asaph.*

UNTO thee, O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* do we give thanks: for *that* thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

2 ¹When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.

¹ Or, *When I shall take a set time.*

3 The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.

4 I said unto the fools, Deal not

PSALM LXXV.

The Psalmist describes the manifestation of God's righteousness in a time of great affliction. The date is uncertain, but it probably belongs to the same age as the following psalms attributed to Asaph in this part of the collection. The style is archaic, abrupt, and rather obscure, but full of energy and grandeur.

The structure is graceful, one introductory verse, then four strophes, each of two verses (2—8, the 8th has two metres), and a close which recapitulates the leading thoughts in *vv.* 1 and 4.

Al-taschith] *i.e.* Destroy not. See note on Ps. lvii.

1. *for that*, &c.] Or, **and Thy name is near, Thy wondrous works have declared it.** This is on the whole the most probable translation. Thus Hupfeld. By the nearness of God's name the Psalmist means the manifestation of God's attributes. God hath shewn Himself, and past wonders have declared His power and justice. See, however, Note below.

2. *When I shall receive*] The marg. **When I shall take a set time** is preferable. The speaker is God, the "set time" is the time appointed for judgment, "the day of the Lord." The application to Christ is obvious, but the Psalmist contemplated an immediate interposition and with reference to then existing evils: see notes on the preceding psalm.

3. *dissolved*] *i.e.* with terror, as before the last judgment, "men's hearts failing them for fear."

I bear up] Or, "I have established." The

foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn:

5 Lift not up your horn on high: speak *not with* a stiff neck.

6 For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the †south.

† Heb. *desert.*

7 But God *is* the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

8 For in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring *them* out, *and* drink *them.*

9 But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

10 All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; *but* the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

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same Almighty power which at the creation set fast the foundations of the earth will maintain fixed order in the midst of all convulsions. The expression "pillars" may, however, be metaphorical, meaning "rulers," as in 1 S. ii. 8, and as "foundations," Ps. xi. 3, lxxxii. 5.

4. *fools*] Here in the sense of empty foolish boasters, as in Ps. v. 5, and lxxiii. 3, to which there is an obvious reference.

Lift not up the horn] The word "lift up" occurs four times in two verses; it marks the leading thought, the pride and self-confidence of God's enemies; the best illustration is found in the speech of Rabshakeh, to which it seems probable that the Psalmist directly alludes.

6. *promotion*] Or, "lifting up." This rendering is much contested, but it is adopted by Hupfeld, and appears to accord better with the context than any which has been proposed in its place. The meaning of the verse is that power comes from no earthly quarter. The "north" is not mentioned, either because the Psalmist passes rapidly to the assertion of God's power, or because the people of Judæa did not expect deliverance from that quarter: the Assyrians themselves came from the north.

from the south] Literally, "desert," but the A. V. gives the meaning.

7. *setteth up*] Or, **lifteth up**; see note above on *v.* 5.

8. *the wine is red*] **and it** (the cup) **foams with wine, full of mixture,** *i.e.* strong spiced wine. A well-known and common figure of divine wrath. See Jer. xxv. 15, xlix. 12, li. 7; Isai. li. 17; Ezek. xxiii. 32, 33; Hab. ii. 16.

NOTE on PSALM LXXV. 1.

The LXX. followed by Vulg. and Syr. had a different and easier reading, *καὶ ἐπικαλεσόμεθα τὸ ὄνομά σου· διηγήσομαι* (Vulg. narrabimus) *πάντα τὰ θαυμάσιά σου· i.e.* נקרא בשמך נספרה. The change is very slight. It has the advantage of accounting for the Masoretic reading קרוב.

PSALM LXXVI.

1 *A declaration of God's majesty in the church.* 11 *An exhortation to serve him reverently.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm *or* Song ‖ of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

IN Judah *is* God known: his name *is* great in Israel.

2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

3 There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

4 Thou *art* more glorious *and* excellent than the mountains of prey.

PSALM LXXVI.

There can be little doubt that this psalm refers to the destruction of Sennacherib's army. Such is the opinion both of the ancient and of most modern commentators. It is closely connected with the preceding psalm, written before the judgment which is here represented as consummated.

The structure is regular, four strophes, each of three verses; the first and third marked by Selah.

1. *is God known*] *i.e.* by the manifestation of His power, both in former times and now by the miraculous destruction of the invading army, cf. Ps. xlviii.

2. *Salem*] The ancient name of Jerusalem, see Gen. xiv. 18; Heb. vii. 1. 2.

his tabernacle] This alludes to the first establishment of the tabernacle in David's time; instead of "is" read "was," *i.e.* was set up.

3. *the arrows of the bow*] Literally, **the**

5 The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.

7 Thou, *even* thou, *art* to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,

9 When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

11 Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents †unto him that ought to be feared.

† Heb. *to fear.*

12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes: *he is* terrible to the kings of the earth.

PSALM LXXVII.

1 *The psalmist sheweth what fierce combat he had with diffidence.* 10 *The victory which he had by consideration of God's great and gracious works.*

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm ‖ of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph*

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lightnings of the bow, a graphic figure, which might have been preserved in the translation: in Ps. lxxviii. 48, the word is rendered "hot thunder-bolts," in Deut. xxxii. 24, "burning heat."

4. *Thou art more glorious*] Or, **Thou art glorious, majestic from the mountains of spoil.** (Thus LXX., Aq., Sym., Theod.) The comparison with the mountains of prey, *i.e.* the strongholds of the invaders, which is adopted by most commentators, and is expressed in our A. V., is hardly satisfactory. By the "mountains of spoil" Hupfeld understands Jerusalem. God is thus said to manifest His glory and majesty from the stronghold where the spoils of the invaders are divided. The Song of Sol. iv. 4 may be compared, if, as a friend suggests, the shields which adorned the towers of Jerusalem were spoils of the mighty slain. The verse might be paraphrased, "Thou, O God, art arrayed in light, Thou hast displayed Thy majesty on Mount Zion, where the spoils of Thy enemies are distributed to Thy people."

5. *slept their sleep*] The sleep of death: a figure which is peculiarly appropriate to the destruction of the Assyrian army in the dead of night.

none...have found their hands] This phrase is remarkable; it seems to represent a death which comes suddenly, yet with a momentary interval of consciousness; the sleeper, awakened by a sudden pang, endeavours in vain to put out his hands and grasp his weapons, but falls back overwhelmed by the deep sleep, which in the next verse is said to fall on chariot and horse, *i.e.* the whole army of the invaders.

7—9. The description of the effect of God's judgments upon the people is very striking; the tones are grave, solemn, speaking rather of awe than exultation; the only grace which the Psalmist claims for his people is meekness, a consciousness of weakness, and dependence on God's power.

10. The meaning of the first clause appears to be that all the wrath and violence of man do but serve to bring out the attributes of God, and so display His glory: the second clause is more doubtful; our version gives a fair sense, God will put an end to all other outbursts of fury on the part of His enemies. This interpretation is defended by Calvin, Venema, Doederlein, and Dathe (who follow Kimchi), and it is supported by an analogous use of the original word in Arabic, Syriac, and in the Mishna. The interpretation suggested by modern commentators seems forced and unnatural, "Thou wilt gird Thyself with the remainder of wrath," *i.e.* God will take the fury of His enemies and adorn Himself with it as a robe of triumph. Delitzsch proposes "with a remainder of wrath wilt Thou gird Thyself," *i.e.* should the enemies' rage be renewed, God will arm Himself with fresh wrath, a reserve, so to speak, of vengeance, in order to subdue it; such too is the explanation of a second Targumist.

11. *unto him that ought to be feared*] This translation is correct, but less forcible than the single word in the original, **the terrible**, the awful and terrible God. The same word is used by Isaiah, viii. 13.

12. *cut off*] The original word is used especially of cutting grapes in the vintage, and refers to the terrible consummation of judgments so often described by the prophets: see Joel i. 13; Rev. xiv. 18; and cf. Isai. xviii. 5.

PSALM LXXVII.

The Psalmist in great distress, of what kind we cannot say, but in common, probably (as the deliverances related are national), with his people, earnestly entreats God for succour, and, at first, seems to despair of it: the recollection of former prosperities, and of mercies

I CRIED unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: †my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

3 I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.

6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

7 Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?

8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth *his* promise fail †for evermore?

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, This *is* my infirmity: *but I will remember* the years of the right hand of the most High.

† Heb. hand.

† Heb. *to generation and generation?*

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vouchsafed in times past, being only painful (*vv.* 4—9). At last, the Spirit of God suggests the thought, that as He was, so He is; and that His power manifested so often in deliverances of His people would quickly be manifested again. The miraculous deliverance which at the instant vividly impresses the imagination of the Psalmist, and turns his despair into hope, is the passage of the Red Sea: in a description of which he rests, dwelling upon its circumstances with a sublime power.

The 3rd chapter of Habakkuk should be read with this psalm, to which it contains frequent allusions, and of which it is in some sense a continuation. The psalm can scarcely be an imitation, its purpose and unity forbid such a supposition: but its spirit, and some phrases in it, may have so impressed themselves upon the national memory, as to be repeated in later prophecy. The expressions in Habakkuk, which seem imitations of the psalm, are fuller. We may conclude with some certainty that the psalm is earlier than the reigns of Josiah or Manasseh, the age of Habakkuk; but beyond this, it is hard to decide anything as to its date. Hengst. and others argue (chiefly from *vv.* 16 and 2 compared with Gen. xxxvii. 35) that the psalm is a lament for the carrying away of the Ten Tribes: but the contents of the psalm do not specially suit such occasion.

1. *I cried unto God*, &c.] Lit. "My voice (is) unto God, and I cry aloud: my voice (is) unto God, (and I say) Oh hearken unto me!" or, "May He hearken to me." The rendering of A.V., *and He gave ear unto me*, does not suit the idea of the psalm. Hope does not spring up till *v.* 10.

2. *my sore ran*, &c.] Marg., my hand. The meaning is, My hand is stretched out (in prayer and supplication) all night; and ceases not (to be outspread). See Note below.

vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5—9 contain a description of the Psalmist during his agony of doubt which is at its climax, almost of despair, in *v.* 7. The tenses in the original are sometimes present, sometimes past, but the purport seems always present.

3. *I complained*] Rather, "I muse" or "meditate."

4. *Thou holdest mine*, &c.] "I sleep not through the night, for Thou holdest mine eyes fast, that they watch (as if on sentry) all night. I speak not, for Thou tiest fast my tongue, so that I cannot relieve myself through speaking." There is doubt as to the meaning of one word, "watches" or "wakings" of the eyes (שְׁמֻרוֹת), which some authorities (Gesen., Moll, Delitzsch, Bunsen, &c.) render "eyelids." "Thou holdest fast mine eyelids that I cannot close them," &c. The general sense is the same, with this rendering, as that given before.

5, 6. *I have considered*, &c.] "I consider the long series of past years and prosperity: I remember the songs which I have often poured forth in the night for mercies received (see Job xxxv. 10), and my spirit anxiously asks, Will the Lord," &c. Cf. Ps. lxxiv. 1. At the end of *v.* 9 there is a pause, and a ray of comfort is suggested in *v.* 10.

8. *promise*] See Ps. cxix. 38, *Stablish Thy word*, or promise, *unto Thy servant:* see too Ps. lvi. 4.

9. *hath he in anger shut up*, &c.] "As a man shuts his hand upon a gift which he refuses to bestow, does God shut up His tender mercies within His breast?" (see Deut. xv. 7).—*Selah*, see Ps. lxviii. 7. The import here is the same as in that place: the accompaniments of music and voices are raised to indicate a change in the spirit of the Psalmist, and a consolation suggested by God Himself. Below, *v.* 15, the import is to add force to the description of the awful passage.

10. *And I said, This is my*, &c.] Or, "Then I said, It is mine own infirmity." See Deut.

11 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

13 Thy way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary: who *is so* great a God as *our* God?

14 Thou *art* the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

15 Thou hast with *thine* arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

17 †The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.

† Heb. *The clouds were poured forth with water.*

18 The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

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xxix. 22; the Hebrew word "sicknesses" is similar to "infirmity" in the text.

the years of the right hand of the most High] "My despair is mine own weakness: (remember) the years in which the right hand of the Most High has helped us." The thought suggested to the despairing Psalmist is rather hinted at, than expressed, in three words, "years," "right hand," and "Most High" (in the original). They convey the notion of rapid thought, like lightning, passing through his mind. The words "but I will remember" are not in the original. Others (De Wette, Delitzsch, Hupfeld, Bunsen) explain differently, "I said, It is mine appointed lot and trial (Jer. x. 19; 1 Pet. v. 6): years (these are) which the mighty hand of God has laid upon me." Or, "It is mine appointed lot and trial, that the right hand of the Most High has turned against me." So the LXX., Vulg., Chald. The interpretation given first is the most expressive; and seems best to suit the context, and the words which follow, *v.* 11, &c.

11. *I will remember*] Or, make mention of: *the works of the* LORD, or, of JAH. There is force in the mention of God by this Name. The eternal unchangeable Jehovah will act towards His people, always, as of old: Ps. lxviii. 4.

12. *I will meditate*, &c., *and talk*, &c.] Saying, *v.* 13, *Thy way*, &c. The word rendered *talk* should rather be "muse" as in *v.* 3.

13. *in the sanctuary*] Rather, "in holiness," or, "encompassed with holiness;" *i.e.* "most holy:" as the Prayer-Book Version, "Thy way, O God! is holy." Holiness is the characteristic of the way of Jehovah above all gods! See Ps. lxviii. 24, *They have seen Thy goings...in the sanctuary*, or, "in holiness." The allusion is to Exod. xv. 11. See also Exod. xv. 13—16, at *v.* 15 of this psalm.

14. *thou hast declared*, &c.] "Thou hast manifested Thy might among the nations."

15. *the sons of Jacob and Joseph*] Commentators refine too much upon this description, when they say that Joseph is mentioned as in a sense the first-born of Jacob (1 Chro. v. 1), and having a double inheritance (Gen. xlviii. 5, 6). The deeds and deservings of Joseph fully explain the selection of his name before that of any other son of Jacob. See Pss. lxxviii. 67, lxxx. 1, lxxxi. 4, 5.

16. *The waters*, &c.] Cf. Pss. xcvii., cxiv. "The waters of the Red Sea saw God, trembled, and made way for His people to pass!" The consequence is not added in the text: only the fact noticed, that "the waters saw God." The accompaniments of the passage follow, *vv.* 18, 19, *i.e.* rain, thunder, lightning, and, perhaps, a horrible whirlwind.

17. *The clouds*, &c.] The marg. is better: "The clouds were poured forth with water." *The skies sent out a sound*, or, the heavens uttered a voice (in thunder): *Thine arrows went abroad*, hither, thither, and everywhere.

18. *The voice of thy thunder*, &c.] Hebr. "The voice of Thy thunder was in the wheel." So the LXX., Vulg. and others. "Wheel," some think, is put for "chariot," and indicates the "chariot of God," in which (see Hab. iii. 8, 15) He troubled the Egyptians. But the "chariot" is not mentioned in the psalm, and the ellipsis is violent. Most interpreters render the word, above translated "wheel" and in the A.V. "the heaven," by "whirlwind." The transition from "wheel" to "whirlwind" is easy. In Isai. xvii. 13 the word in question seems to mean "thistledown," or, "a light thing whirling before the wind." In Ps. lxxxiii. 13, it is parallel to "stubble." In the first of these places the A.V. renders it "a rolling thing," in the latter "a wheel." A whirlwind is not the necessary accompaniment of thunder, and its abrupt curt mention with the thunder is harsh. Grotius conceives that "wheel" is put for "the air" or "æther," which common opinion regards as whirling round about us. This idea led probably to the rendering of the A.V. "the heaven," and of the Prayer-Book Version "round about."

19 Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

20 [a] Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

[a] Exod. 14. 19.

20. After the preparation detailed above, God made a way for His people through the sea, and they followed Him: but Himself is unseen, and His miracles only indicate His presence. So too in nature, and in the spirit of man, His presence, says Del., is not seen; it is only inferred from the deeds which He has done and the traces which He has left.

Abp. Secker (notes on the Psalms in Meyrick's translation, p. 166) remarks on this psalm, that something is wanting, and that it ends abruptly: similarly Thol., Rosen., Olsh., &c. But its abruptness is expressive. In the joy and exultation of the miracle recorded, the occasion of the psalm is forgotten: and the Psalmist, casting off the burden that oppressed him at its commencement, reposes in full confidence on his Almighty protector. "The minstrel" (says Vaihinger) "lets his harp drop, and reclines in fulness of faith on God's love."

NOTE on PSALM LXXVII. 2.

The Hebrew word (נִגְּרָה) explained above "stretched out," is of doubtful import: it means rather "poured out" like water (*we are as water spilt on the ground*, 2 S. xiv. 14); as if the hand were thrown out in supplication, and stretched out, so as scarcely to be drawn back. Or it may be that a word properly applied to a flood of tears that ceases not is boldly applied to the hand, which ceases not to be extended and to supplicate. A somewhat similar expression Lam. iii. 49, *Mine eye trickleth down* (Heb. is poured out or spilled, &c.) *and ceaseth not, without any intermission*. The Targum, to avoid the difficulty, renders "By night mine eye distilled in tears:" as if the word translated "hand" or "sore" meant "eye." The Rabbins interpret the same word "my wound;" hence no doubt the A.V.

PSALM LXXVIII.

1 *An exhortation both to learn and to preach the law of God.* 9 *The story of God's wrath against the incredulous and disobedient.* 67 *The Israelites being rejected, God chose Judah, Zion, and David.*

[1] Maschil of Asaph.

[1] Or, A Psalm *for Asaph to give instruction.*

GIVE ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 [a] I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

[a] Ps. 49. 4. Matth. 13. 35.

PSALM LXXVIII.

The history of Israel, from the Exodus to the establishment of the kingdom of David, is reviewed by the Psalmist in this the longest, and probably the earliest, of the historical psalms, intended for public recitation in the services of the sanctuary. Those services were organized by David, and the chief place among the superintendents was assigned to Asaph (see notes on Ps. l.), to whom this psalm is attributed by the inscription. The principal object of the writer is to draw lessons of warning and admonition from the records of national sins and punishments. Special attention is directed to the wrongdoings of one tribe, that of Ephraim; partly, it may be, as having from the time of Joshua throughout the period of the Judges held the post of leader of the whole nation, and as such being in some sense its representative; partly, however, with reference to the transfer of the national sanctuary from Shiloh to Mount Zion (see *vv.* 67, 68). It seems strange that the appropriateness of this subject to the age of David should be questioned. When the large band of singers in the temple were appointed, chosen doubtless with reference to their spiritual and mental qualifications, one main duty must have been to inculcate the lessons derived from the events of national history; and no events could present stronger claims than those described in this psalm. It was impossible that the transfer of the sanctuary should not have been celebrated, most improbable that the circumstances which preceded and occasioned the transfer should have been passed over in silence. Those circumstances are not described in terms calculated to give reasonable ground of offence to the powerful tribe of Ephraim, nor in such as indicate a settled feeling of animosity: the guilt is described as national, nor is any exemption from it claimed for the tribe of Judah. It is indeed certain that the rivalry between Ephraim and Judah, of which traces may be pointed out in earlier times, burst out into an open quarrel at the time of David's

3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

4 We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, [b]that they should make them known to their children:

[b] Deut. 4. 9. & 6. 7.

6 That the generation to come might know *them, even* the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation †*that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

† Heb. that *prepared not their heart.*

9 The children of Ephraim, *being*

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restoration to the kingdom, see 2 S. xix. 41—43, when "the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel;" and such feelings may have given a certain tone to the utterances of the Psalmist. David might have been more careful in his own compositions to spare the susceptibilities of so considerable a portion of his subjects, but it would scarcely occur to him to suppress statements at once true, important in their spiritual bearings, and delivered under the guidance of God. The psalm, however, may have been composed some few years after the accession of Solomon, though it is doubtful whether the allusion in *v.* 69 implies the existence of the temple.

Had the work been written after the revolt of the ten tribes, some reference to that event, and to their relapse into idolatry, might have been looked for: nor would a writer, after the exile, have failed to point out the far more terrible warnings suggested by the captivity of Judah and destruction of the temple.

The style of the whole psalm accords with the date and authorship thus assigned to it. It has the characteristics of Asaph, gravity, force, "a lofty judicial tone, with awful warnings and admonitions:" there are also special points of resemblance with other psalms which belong to him or to the Korahites: see notes on *vv.* 1, 2, 7, 12, 17, &c.

The structure of the psalm is thoroughly symmetrical; it is divided at the end of *v.* 31 into two parts, each consisting of seven strophes: in the first part five, each with four verses, then two with five and six verses severally: in the second part five strophes with six verses each, wound up, like the first portion, with two of five and six: thus presenting the schema:

4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 5, 6;
6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 5, 6.

1. *Give ear, O my people*] This exordium befits the position and character of Asaph, and bears a striking resemblance to his style. In the fiftieth psalm he speaks as a prophet calling the people to listen to the words of the Lord; here he speaks in the name of God as a public teacher, commissioned to proclaim and explain the law. Cf. Isai. li. 4, and xlix. 1. Compare "my law" with Ps. lxxxix. 30; "my people," l. 7, lxxvii. 15, 20.

2. *I will open my mouth*] See marg. references, and note on Job iii. 1.

a parable] Here in the widest sense, in sententious sayings, drawing out the hidden meaning of ancient records.

utter] The word implies a strong impulse; the words are forced out by an inward movement. Sym. ἀναβλύσω προβλήματα ἀρχαῖα.

dark sayings] Sayings which contain deeper truths than lie on the surface. In Arabic the word occurs in the sense of a simile or allegory. Cf. Prov. i. 6; Judg. xiv. 12. The expressions in this verse belong specially to the age of Solomon. Köster supposes a reference to the artistic structure: which seems far less probable.

sayings of old] Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 5, 11.

4. *We will not hide,* &c.] Asaph dwells upon the thought that in discharging this duty of a teacher he is obeying the ancient injunction of the law; cf. Deut. iv. 9, vi. 7, xi. 19; see also Job xv. 18. Points of resemblance with Job are numerous in all the songs of Asaph.

6. *the children which should be born*] See Ps. xxii. 31.

7. *works of God*] See Ps. lxxvii. 12.

8. *a stubborn and rebellious generation*] Asaph here strikes the key-note of his exhortation. It is peculiar to the prophets and teachers of Israel to urge without sparing the warnings derived from the sins of their forefathers. Cf. Deut. ix. 7, 24, xxi. 18, 20, xxxi. 27; Jer. v. 23. In the whole of the following section to *v.* 54, Asaph dwells upon the scenes in the wilderness.

set not their heart aright] Or, "established," directed it aright. See Job xi. 13.

9. *The children of Ephraim*] The mention of Ephraim in this passage is undoubtedly

armed, *and* †carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

10 They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

11 And forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, *in* the field of Zoan.

13 [c]He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

14 [d]In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

15 [e]He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as *out of* the great depths.

16 He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

17 And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness.

18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

19 [f]Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God †furnish a table in the wilderness?

20 [g]Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

21 Therefore the LORD heard *this*, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

22 Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

23 Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,

24 [h]And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

25 †Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

†Heb. *throwing forth.* c Exod. 14. d Exod. 13. & 14. e Exod. 17. Numb. 20. Ps. 105. 1 Cor. 10. 4. f Numb. 11. 4. †Heb. *order.* g Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11. h Exod. 16. 14. John 6. 31. †Or, *Every one did eat the bread of the mighty.*

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perplexing. The reference must certainly be to an event in the early history of Israel. A double charge is brought against the Ephraimites, cowardice in battle, and disobedience to God. The former charge cannot refer to a defeat by Judah, but by some heathen nation, probably to the transactions recorded in Judges ii. 10—16. Peculiar responsibility may have attached to Ephraim, as inheriting the hegemony from Joshua. See too the note on Josh. xvii. 14. It is also possible that the national guilt of idolatry was specially connected with the tribe of Ephraim; cf. Hos. iii. 3. Still in all other passages both charges are brought against the nation as such, and might be expected to be urged by Asaph, who addressed these words in the first place to the people of Judah. Conjectural emendations are always unsatisfactory, but it is perhaps allowable in this passage to assume that the name of Ephraim may have been substituted by a transcriber for that of Israel: cf. *v.* 57.

12. *Zoan*] From Num xiii. 22 we learn that Zoan was built seven years after Hebron. Zoan or Tanis, now San, was a city of great importance, and the chief residence of the Pharaohs of the 18th and 19th dynasties on the North-western frontier. See note on Exod. v. 1. The mention of the name in this passage may either be attributed to an ancient tradition independent of the Pentateuch, or to the knowledge of Egypt which was a result of the friendly intercourse of David and the marriage of Solomon with an Egyptian princess. It has, therefore, a peculiar propriety in the mouth of the elder Asaph. In the Egyptian 'Zeitschrift' for 1872, p. 16, an account is given by Brugsch of an inscription in which the hieroglyphic name of Zoan, exactly corresponding with the Hebrew, is for the first time discovered, with the further peculiarity of expression, *Sochet Zoan, i.e.* "the field of Zoan." In the same article Brugsch shews that Zoan is not, as he formerly supposed, identical with Avaris, but with Rameses, the city from which the Israelites started on their march out of Egypt: two points of great importance in reference to this psalm, and to Exodus.

13. *as an heap*] Exod. xv. 8.

16. *the rock*] Or, "cliff;" cf. Num. xx. 8, 10, 11.

17. *the most High*] Cf. 35, 36, and lxxvii. 10.

18. *they tempted*] Sc. by inwardly questioning His goodness and power. Exod. xvi.; 1 Cor. x. 9.

21. *was wroth*] Deut. iii. 26.

23. *the doors of heaven*] Gen. vii. 11.

25. *angels' food*] Lit. "bread of mighty ones;" but the interpretation of the A. V., which follows the old versions (see also Wisd. xvi. 20, xix. 20), and is defended by modern

26 He caused an east wind † to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.

† Heb. *to go.*

27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and † feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:

† Heb. *fowl of wing.*

28 And he let *it* fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

29 So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;

30 They were not estranged from their lust. But *i* while their meat *was* yet in their mouths,

i Numb. 11. 33.

31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and † smote down the ¹ chosen *men* of Israel.

† Heb. *made to bow.* ¹ Or, *young men.*

32 For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.

33 Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

34 When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God.

35 And they remembered that God *was* their rock, and the high God their redeemer.

36 Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

38 But he, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

39 For he remembered that they *were but* flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

40 How oft did they ¹ provoke him in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert!

¹ Or, rebel against him.

41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

42 They remembered not his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them ¹ from the enemy.

¹ Or, from affliction.

43 How he had † wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan:

† Heb. set.

44 *k* And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.

k Exod. 7. 20.

45 *l* He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.

l Exod. 8. 24.

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critics (Hupfeld, Delitzsch, &c.), is probably correct; not, however, in the sense "food such as angels have," but "supplied by angelic ministrations," equivalent to "the corn of heaven" in the preceding clause. The symbolism of manna is recognized by all Christian divines, and rests upon the authority of our Lord, from whose words, however, it is clear that manna was a product of earth, supplied by heavenly power, and but a figure of the true bread "which cometh down from heaven," Joh. vi. 49—51.

30. *They were not estranged from their lust*] *i. e.* they had not as yet satiated their appetite; or, "had not yet repented of their desire;" thus Syr., Hitz., Stier.

31. *the fattest of them*] See xxii. 29.

33. *in vanity*] The Hebrew word is used specially of short and insecure life, as in Gen. iv. 2, the name Abel, or Hebel. The whole generation died out prematurely.

34. *inquired early*] Or, "earnestly." See note on lxiii. 1.

35. *their rock*] See Deut. xxxii. 4.
their redeemer] See lxxiv. 2; Isa. xli. 14, xliii. 14, &c.

37. *stedfast*] Or, "faithful." The same word is used in *v.* 8.

38. *full of compassion*] See Exod. xxxiv. 6.

39. *he remembered*] Ps. ciii. 14, 16; Job vii. 7, x. 9; and cf. Gen. vi. 3.
a wind] Job vii. 7.

40. *grieve*] Cf. Eph. iv. 30.

41. *limited*] In their minds set limits to His power. The Hebrew word is rare, and the meaning disputed; the A. V. is defended by Stier, Hengst., Del. Others follow the LXX. παρώξυναν, "provoked;" thus Luther. Hupfeld: the meaning in that case would be drawn from the Syriac.

43. *Zoan*] See *v.* 12.

45. *divers sorts*] See note on Exod. viii. 17, 21; where, however, the words "a species of beetle" are not strictly correct, since, as a naturalist informs the writer, the blatta orientalis is a sort of cockroach. In this passage Sym. has κυνόμυιαν.

[m] Exod. 10. 13.
[n] Exod. 9. 23.
† Heb. killed.
‖ Or, great hailstones.
† Heb. He shut up.
‖ Or, lightnings.

46 [m] He gave also their increase unto the caterpiller, and their labour unto the locust.

47 [n] He † destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycomore trees with ‖ frost.

48 † He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to ‖ hot thunderbolts.

49 He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels *among them*.

† Heb. He weighed a path.
‖ Or, their beasts to the murrain, Exod. 9. 3.
[o] Exod. 9. 3. & 12. 29.

50 † He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave ‖ their life over to the pestilence;

51 [o] And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of *their* strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

52 But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.

[p] Exod. 14. 27. & 15. 10.
† Heb. covered.

53 And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea [p] † overwhelmed their enemies.

54 And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, *even to* this mountain, *which* his right hand had purchased.

55 He cast out the heathen also before them, and [q] divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

[q] Josh. 13. 7.

56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:

57 But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

58 [r] For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

[r] Deut. 32. 21.

59 When God heard *this*, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:

60 [s] So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men;

[s] 1 Sam. 4. 11

61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.

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46. *the caterpiller*] Asaph uses a more specific word than is given in Ex. x. 1—20. It occurs in Joel i. 4, ii. 25.

47. *their vines*] On the vineyards of Egypt see note on Gen. xl. 9.

49. *by sending evil angels among them*] Or, **a mission of angels of woe**; thus Kay. The evil is not necessarily in the nature of the angels, but in the penalties which they are commissioned to inflict; see, however, Job i. and Introduction, p. 16. Natural agencies may possibly be included. See Ps. civ. 4.

51. *Ham*] The father of Mizraim: Chem, or Ham (black), is the Egyptian name of the whole country, derived, however, as Egyptologers hold, from the *black* soil of the Nile.

52. *like sheep*] See lxxvii. 20.

54. *even to this mountain*] Thus Ex. xv. 17, see note, and cf. *v.* 13. "This mountain" is probably the mountain of the sanctuary, Moriah; though even here Dr Kay and others hold that it may apply to the whole of Canaan, referring to Exodus, above quoted, and to Deut. xi. 11; Isai. xi. 9, lvii. 13: thus too Hupfeld. Ewald stands alone in referring the word to Shiloh.

57. *like a deceitful bow*] See Hos. vii. 16; and note on *v.* 9. The apostasy is here distinctly represented as the sin of the whole nation, not of one tribe.

58. *to jealousy*] Cf. Num. xxv. 11.

59. *Israel*] This is supposed by many critics to apply specially or exclusively to Ephraim, on account of the reference to Shiloh and to Judah in *vv.* 60, 68: but the guilt which brought on the punishment was national, and visited on the whole people.

60. *the tabernacle of Shiloh*] See the account of the establishment of the tabernacle by "the whole congregation of the children of Israel," Josh. xviii. 1. It was the national sanctuary throughout the period of the Judges; the forsaking here spoken of was accomplished or testified by the capture of the ark. The tabernacle itself appears to have been removed first to Nob, 1 S. xxi. 1, and then to Gibeon; see 1 K. iii. 4. From Jeremiah vii. 12, we learn that the sanctuary had been deserted, if not destroyed, whether by foreign enemies or otherwise, probably long before the prophet's time. This passage is quoted in the 'Christian Observer,' 1872, p. 261, as conclusive evidence of the identity of the tabernacle at Shiloh.

61. *his strength*] The ark of the covenant; see note on Ps. lxiii. 2. Thus too "glory" is associated with the ark; hence the name Ichabod, "the glory is departed from Israel,

62 He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

63 The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not †given to marriage.

† Heb. *praised.*

64 Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.

65 Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, *and* like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

66 And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach.

67 Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

69 And he built his sanctuary like high *palaces*, like the earth which he hath †established for ever.

70 *a*He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds:

71 †*b*From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

72 So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

† Heb. *founded.* *a* 1 Sam. 16. 12. 2 Sam. 7. 8. † Heb. *From after.* *b* 2 Sam. 5. 2. 1 Chron. 11. 2.

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because the ark of God was taken," 1 S. iv. 21. There is no indication here of a special visitation on Ephraim. God was "wroth with his inheritance," *v.* 62, and the whole people were reduced to subjection under the Philistines.

62. *unto the sword*] First in the terrible overthrow, when 30,000 Israelites perished. 1 S. iv. 10.

63. *The fire*] This is generally understood to mean the fire of war, or the sword, as in Num. xxi. 28; Isai. xxvi. 11; Jer. xlviii. 45. The fire of divine wrath may be meant. See lxxix. 5, lxxxix. 46.

given to marriage] The expression "praised," as in the marg., refers to bridal songs, and such encomiums as we read in Ps. xlv. and in Song Sol. iv.

64. *and their widows*, &c.] Cf. Job xxvii. 15. The widow's heart broke, 1 S. iv. 22. The neglect of funeral rites marks the extremity of desolation.

65. *Then the Lord awaked*] See Pss. vii. 6, xxxv. 23, lxxiii. 20. The awakening marks the manifestation of divine power, sudden, unexpected, irresistible. See 1 S. xiv.

that shouteth] Cf. Isai. xlii. 13, 14. The cry of the warrior, after a long cessation from fighting, full of strength and fury, is thus vividly designated. The reader will remember the shout of Achilles, the turning point of the Iliad.

66. *in the hinder parts*] This is an unhappy rendering: the Hebrew means smote his enemies, driving them **backward**; thus Ps. xl. 14, and in every passage where the word occurs in descriptions of a defeat. The A. V. seems to countenance the Rabbinical tradition alluding to the plague of the Philistines.

67. *Moreover ... Joseph*] One result of the long series of victories by which God delivered His people from their oppressors was the final transfer of the sanctuary to Zion. The hegemony was transferred to Judah; the tabernacle of Joseph, that is of the tribe of Ephraim, ceased to be the centre of the national religion. If this psalm was composed, as the Inscription states, by Asaph, and doubtless for recitation in the sanctuary of Zion, it is impossible that such an event should have been unnoticed, nor, although the record must have been painful to the Ephraimites, is there any expression calculated to cause needless offence.

68. *which he loved*] See Ps. lxxxvii. 2, and cf. Ps. ii. 6. The proof of that love was the transfer of the ark to Zion. See 2 S. vi. 12—18, vii. 27—29.

69. *like high palaces*] Rather, "like the heights," sc. of heaven; thus Hupfeld, who compares Job xxi. 22, xxii. 12. The comparison with heaven seems far more appropriate than with earthly palaces, and is applicable to the tabernacle as the abode of the Lord. There does not appear to be a reference to the outward majesty of the temple, or to its stability, but to the promise of God made to David, 2 S. vii.

70. *He chose David*] See 1 S. xvi. 11, 12. In this great liturgical psalm the call of David necessarily takes its place as the climax of all blessings. During the king's life the record of his humble estate and calling has a special propriety. The abrupt conclusion is admitted by rationalists to imply that the psalm was written in David's time: see the note in the 'Christian Observer,' quoted above on *v.* 60.

71 *to feed Jacob*] See 2 S. vii. 7, 8.

PSALM LXXIX.

1 *The psalmist complaineth of the desolation of Jerusalem.* 8 *He prayeth for deliverance,* 13 *and promiseth thankfulness.*

A Psalm [1] of Asaph.

[1] Or, *for.*

O GOD, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

2 The dead bodies of thy servants have they given *to be* meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.

3 Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and *there was* none to bury *them.*

4 [a] We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

5 [b] How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

6 [c] Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

[a] Ps. 44. 13.
[b] Ps. 89. 46.
[c] Jer. 10. 25.

PSALM LXXIX.

This psalm, which bears a near resemblance to the seventy-fourth, represents the temple desecrated, the city reduced to a heap of ruins, the people around Jerusalem massacred in numbers and unburied, multitudes led into captivity, and reserved for a cruel death. These indications do not exactly coincide with either of the two dates usually assumed by commentators. In the Chaldean invasion the temple was not merely desecrated, but burnt down, and utterly destroyed; in the Maccabean period the city was not reduced to a heap of stones. Both psalms may have been composed immediately after the plundering of the temple by Shishak, when the Psalmist would have before him the scenes so graphically described. We have no notice of destruction of buildings in Jerusalem at that time, but the Egyptian conquerors were not likely to leave the city without such marks of their presence. That many Hebrews were led into captivity on that special occasion is a fact attested by the monuments of Karnak; see note on Ps. lxxiv.

There are four strophes, the first (1—4) with four verses, the remainder of three each. The verses are somewhat longer than usual, with unequal members, a form well adapted to elegiac poetry.

1. *the heathen ... inheritance*] Cf. lxxiv. 2; Lam. i. 10.

defiled] The word implies the actual presence of the enemy in the temple, but not its destruction; cf. Ps. lxxiv. 7. In the 5th year of Rehoboam Shishak took away the treasures of the house of the Lord. See 1 K. xiv. 25, 26, and 2 Chro. xii. 2—10. This description so far is equally applicable to the profanation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes.

laid Jerusalem on heaps] Or, "in ruins." The full records of the Syrian period leave no place for this destruction. From the very brief notices of Shishak's invasion, it is clear that the city was spared, but apparently after a siege, during which a considerable portion may have been laid in heaps by the formidable engines of the Egyptians; see Wilkinson, Vol. I. p. 390. The historical period, which so far agrees most fully with this description, is that of the Chaldeans. Cf. the prophecy in Mic. iii. 12.

2. *The dead bodies*] The passage is quoted, evidently as an old prophecy fulfilled in his own time, by the author of the Maccabees, 1 Macc. vii. 17; see note at end. The circumstance in itself supplies no indication of date: it was common to every foreign invasion. See Deut. xxviii. 26; Jer. vii. 33, xv. 3.

thy servants] Or "saints;" see note on Ps. xvi. 10; the term is generic, but implies personal piety.

3. *round about Jerusalem*] This seems to imply that the slaughter ceased when Jerusalem itself was occupied; a circumstance which does not suit the Chaldean invasion. The immense army of Shishak does not appear to have encountered any resistance when it entered the city; a fact which seems necessarily implied in the plundering of the temple, and in the servitude of the nation; see 2 Chro. xii. 7—9.

4. *our neighbours*] The word implies actual dwellers in and about the territory, such for instance as the descendants of the old inhabitants who had been reduced to subjection by David, and were employed, doubtless with little consideration, in the works of Solomon's reign. Their exultation at the humiliation of his successor is just what might be expected.

round about us] This applies to the neighbouring tribes and nations, Syrians, Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites whose prince Hadad was closely allied with the Egyptians, see 1 K. xi. 14—23.

5—7. Appeal to God, implying a long continuance of the calamity. The nation was in subjection to Shishak for some time; see 2 Chro. xii. 8.

7 For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place.

8 [d]O remember not against us [1]former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.

9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.

10 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight *by* the †revenging of the blood of thy servants *which is* shed.

11 Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of †thy power †preserve thou those that are appointed to die;

12 And render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.

13 So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise †to all generations.

d Isai. 64. 9.
1 Or, *the iniquities of them that were before us.*
† Heb. *vengeance.*
† Heb. *thine arm.*
† Heb. *reserve the children of death.*
† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

PSALM LXXX.

1 *The psalmist in his prayer complaineth of the miseries of the church.* 8 *God's former favours are turned into judgments.* 14 *He prayeth for deliverance.*

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim-Eduth, A Psalm [1]of Asaph.

1 Or, *for Asaph.*

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7. *his dwelling place*] The word properly means a habitation of shepherds, caula; it is used of the Sanctuary, Exod. xv. 13; 2 S. xv. 25; but in this and most other passages it is understood by nearly all critics to denote "pasture," the pastoral district; thus Rosen., Hengst., Hupfeld, Perowne.

8. *for we are brought very low*] These words, though strong, are not strong enough for the destruction of the nation: the writer was evidently in his own land, then in lowly estate, as it would be under Shishak.

10. *Where is their God?*] The triumph over a nation was always regarded as a proof of the weakness, or absence, of its God: hence the force of the following appeal, the blood shed by the invader was that of Jehovah's servants.

11. *of the prisoner*] The monuments of Karnak shew that Shishak led numbers of the Jewish nobility into captivity, and that many were reserved for death as offerings to his god. The prisoners who were sent to Babylon were not massacred, Nebuchadnezzar slew his victims on the spot. It is observable that in no part of the psalm do we find a prayer for the general restoration of the nation, such as characterize all the productions of the later period.

appointed to die] Literally, "children of death." Cf. 1 S. xx. 31. Our version gives the meaning, though it loses the force of the original. The Hebrew idiom is best explained by Cremer, 'Biblische Gräcität,' p. 562.

12. *reproach*] Ps. lxxiv. 10, 18, 22.

13. *thy people*] Ps. lxxiv. 1.

The careful examination of this psalm by Himpel, 'Quartalschrift,' 1870, p. 432 ff., establishes the following points. 1. There is a close connection between this and the 74th psalm: thus Ps. lxxix. 5, "How long, Lord? wilt thou be angry for ever?" Cf. lxxiv. 1, 10. lxxix. 2 describes the evil which is feared in lxxiv. 19; compare also lxxix. 13, and lxxiv. 1. The lamentations refer to the slaughter of the people, the desecration or overthrow of the temple. 2. Both psalms are closely connected with Jeremiah (ch. x. 25), and a comparison of the passages leads to the conclusion that the prophet adopted the Psalmist's words, a point open to dispute, but well supported by Himpel. 3. The application of the psalms to the period of the Maccabees is not questioned, but the quotation of this psalm in 1 Macc. vii. 16, "according to the word which he wrote," clearly assumes its previous acceptance as a portion of Holy Writ; since the word "he" cannot refer to the subject of the preceding clause, viz. Alcimus the murderer; Eusebius supplies "Asaph," and the Syriac version "the prophet;" and it is certain that one or the other word was either expressed or understood by the author of that book.

Psalm LXXX.

The prayers in this psalm apply specially to the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. There is no special mention of Judah. It is evidently written while the temple is standing (note on *v.* 1), and the people to which the Psalmist belongs occupy their native land. The devastation is terrible, the vineyard is laid waste, the branches cut down and burnt, but the Psalmist relies on the continued favour of God to the man of His right hand, and anticipates a final deliverance. All these circumstances point either to the period immediately preceding the captivity of the ten tribes, or to the interval between that event and the Chaldean invasion, or shortly before that former event, Himpel, p. 461. It is, however, not improbable that it was composed with refer-

GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, shine forth.

2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and †come *and* save us.

3 Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts, how long †wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?

5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

6 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

9 Thou preparedst *room* before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

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ence to the same events which gave occasion to the 74th and 79th psalms. The extreme beauty of the imagery, the grace and dignity of the style, remind the reader of the noblest productions of Asaph's school.

Köster observes that "the structure of this elegiac psalm has something quite peculiar. *vv.* 3, 7, 19 are a refrain, in which the predicates of God, which are concentrated in *v.* 4 (cf. Ps. lix. 5), increase gradually: and thus the strophes enclosed within the refrain are longer by degrees, consisting severally of three, four, and two of six verses. The two last verses form a distinct portion with the allegory of the vine, for which reason probably they are not separated by a refrain." This structure seems characteristic; see remarks on Ps. lxxviii.

Shoshannim] Ps. xlv.

1. The Psalmist grounds the appeal to God on His old relation to Israel, with express reference to the last blessing of Jacob, Gen. xlviii. 15, and on His continued presence in the Temple between the Cherubim. The prayer is for all Israel, but apparently with special regard to the ten tribes.

2. Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh are named together probably as children of Rachel (see Num. ii. 18—24, and x. 22—24); the Psalmist prays that God's power may be specially manifested in the salvation of those three tribes. This combination presents some difficulty, since Benjamin was united to the kingdom of Judah: but a large portion, including the cities Bethel, Gilgal and Jericho, belonged to the northern kingdom, and it is probable that the district was overrun, and the inhabitants led into captivity, by Shalmaneser. Shishak also captured several cities in the same district. This passage is conclusive against the Maccabean hypothesis.

3. *Turn us again*] This seemingly points to a restoration from captivity, but the expression is frequently used of a deliverance from any great calamity; see note on Job xlii. 10. In this first refrain we have the name Elohim, God; in verse 7, Elohim, God of hosts; in the 4th and last verses, O Lord God of hosts, a striking combination, which shews how much the Psalmist was guided by subjective feeling in the choice of the divine names, and how little dependence can be placed upon chronological assumptions based on such usage.

4. *O LORD God of hosts*] A form not common in the psalms, but occurring in lix. 5, lxxxiv. 8.

wilt thou be angry] Literally, "hast Thou smoked," a common metaphor for wrath; see Pss. xviii. 8, lxxiv. 1. The Psalmist uses the past tense because the wrath has already been long manifested; the A.V. gives the substantial meaning.

against the prayer] Lit. "with (*i.e. notwithstanding*) the prayer;" the anger continues, not excited, but as yet not appeased by prayer: thus Hupfeld.

5. *feedest them*] See Ps. xlii. 3.

in great measure] Literally, "a goblet;" the A.V. gives the sense. Cf. xlii. 3.

6. *our neighbours*] Here, as in lxxix. 4, the Psalmist probably alludes to the remnants of Gentile races scattered through Palestine ever ready to take part with Israel's enemies.

7. *O God of hosts*] The addition of "hosts" is equivalent to an expression of confidence in God's power.

8. *a vine out of Egypt*] This passage draws out all the force and beauty of the figure first applied to Joseph in the blessing of Jacob, to which the Psalmist evidently refers, "Joseph is a fruitful bough," &c. (Gen. xlix. 22). Compare Isai. v. 1—7, xxvii. 2—6; Jer. ii. 21, xii. 10; Ezek. xv. 6, xvii. 5.

planted it] The expression first occurs in its figurative meaning in Exod. xv. 17, to which the Psalmist probably refers. Cf. Ps. xliv. 2.

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof *were like* † the goodly cedars.

† Heb. *the cedars of God.*

11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

12 Why hast thou *then* broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

15 And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch *that* thou madest strong for thyself.

16 *It is* burned with fire, *it is* cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself.

18 So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

19 Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

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10. *goodly cedars*] Lit. "cedars of God." Objection is taken to the figure as hyperbolical, but the object of the Psalmist is to shew the more than natural growth of the nation. For the idiom cf. Gen. xxiii. 6.

11. *the river*] The Euphrates, the extreme limit of the Israelitish kingdom in its ideal extent, nearly realized under Solomon.

12. Compare Isai. v. 5.

13. *The boar ... the wild beast*] A general description of the invaders, not necessarily, or probably, of an individual. Cf. Jer. v. 6.

14. *Return, we beseech thee*] See *v.* 3.

15. Two words in this verse are doubtful, "vineyard" and "branch;" the former may be rendered "the plant," (see, however, Note below), but the latter in the original is "son," which may be equivalent to branch (as in Gen. xlix. 22, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, lit. *son*, בן, whose בנות, lit. *daughters*, *i.e.* branches run over the wall"), but more probably it is to be understood literally; the Psalmist leaves the metaphor. and points out its meaning. The vine which God plants is Israel His adopted child; thus "and have called my son out of Egypt," Hos. xi. 1. See also Exod. iv. 22.

16. *it is cut down*] The word is used specially of thorns cut down, and used as fuel; thus Isai. xxxiii. 12. Compare our Lord's words of fruitless branches of the vine, John xv. 6.

17. *the man of thy right hand*] *i.e.* the people of Israel, so called as delivered by God's power and strengthened for His special service: or there may be a reference to David, see Ps. lxxxix. 21. The application to the Messiah, which the Jewish interpreters recognized, rests upon the fact that He is the ideal and representative of the nation. What is partially true of the nation, is absolutely true of Him. See Luke i. 66.

18. *quicken us*] *i.e.* restore us to life, give us renewed life, Ps. lxxi. 20. The spiritual application of this psalm reaches the central and most vital truths of religion, the redemption of God's people by the Son of man, and their renovation by His Spirit.

19. *O LORD God of hosts*] The name of Jehovah, which recurs at the close of the psalm, as though the Psalmist felt that his prayer was accepted in virtue of the covenant, which that word represents.

NOTE on PSALM LXXX. 15.

The word כַּנָּה, here rendered "vineyard," without authority, is generally taken to mean a plant, but the interpretation of the LXX. καταρτισαι, Vulg. perfice, "establish," is adopted by Michaelis, with a slight modification, sc. "protect," from the Arabic *kanna*; thus too Hupfeld, who shews that an imperative is required, and that this verb explains the construction. The verse would then be rendered, "and protect what Thy hand planted, and the branch which Thou hast strengthened for thyself."

PSALM LXXXI.

1 *An exhortation to a solemn praising of God.* 4 *God challengeth that duty by reason of his benefits.* 8 *God, exhorting to obedience, complaineth of their disobedience, which proveth their own hurt.*

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, *A Psalm* ‖ of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph*

SING aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

4 For this *was* a statute for Israel, *and* a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained in Joseph *for* a testimony, when he went out ‖through the land of Egypt: *where* I heard a language *that* I understood not.

6 I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands ‖were delivered from the pots.

7 Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I [a]proved thee at the waters of ‖Meribah. Selah.

17.

8 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;

9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

10 I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.

12 [b]So I gave them up ‖unto their own hearts' lust: *and* they walked in their own counsels.

13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, *and* Israel had walked in my ways!

14 I should soon have subdued

[b] Acts 14. 16.
‖ Or, *to the hardness of their hearts*, or *imaginations*.

PSALM LXXXI.

A psalm for public recitation at a festival, and, as the special mention of trumpets indicates, at the feast of Tabernacles on the 1st of Tisri. The rapid alternation of interlocutors, and the style, grave and energetic, are characteristic of Asaph.

Four strophes seem to be distinctly marked, *vv.* 1—3, 4—7, 8—10, 11 and 12, 13—16; presenting a scheme less symmetrical than is usual in Asaphic psalms, 3, 4, 3, 2, 4.

1. *Sing aloud*] Deut. xxxii. 43, where A.V. has "rejoice."

make a joyful noise] The word is specially used of the blare of trumpets, Lev. xxiii. 24, Num. xxix. 1; see Ps. xlvii. 1.

2. *the timbrel*] Exod. xv. 20.

3. *in the new moon*] Every new moon was celebrated both with sacrifices (Num. xxviii. 11) and with sound of trumpets, but the new moon of the seventh month, the sabbatic month, in which the great festival of Tabernacles was observed, was especially solemnized by blowing of trumpets (Num. xxix. 1); ancient and most modern commentators agree that this psalm was composed for recitation upon that day, which is called in Lev. xxiii. 24 "a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation."

our solemn feast day] The feast of Tabernacles was especially remarkable for its festive character, so that it was frequently called "the feast" absolutely. There was an interval of fifteen days between the new moon and its celebration, and this psalm may have been recited on both occasions.

5. *where I heard a language that I understood not*] Rather, omitting "where," **I heard a language I knew not.** This is generally understood to mean a foreign, barbarous language, and the interpretation is borne out by many similar passages (Ps. cxiv. 1; Deut. xxviii. 49; Isai. xxxiii. 19); but there appears good reason to adopt the sense pointed out by Hupfeld, "there I heard for the first time the voice of God, which I knew not, speaking on Sinai." The reference to that great manifestation seems better suited to the context, and introduces the following address of the Deity. Kay, "The lip of one I had not known then heard I," referring, as Delitzsch does, to the unknown significance of the name Jehovah.

6. *from the pots*] Or, **the basket**, sc. in which Egyptian bricklayers bore the clay for bricks (thus the LXX.): but the word means also earthen vessels, as in Job xli. 31.

7. *in the secret place of thunder*] The cloud by which the Almighty at once manifested and veiled His presence, before, during, and after the passage through the Red Sea. Exod. xiii. 21, xiv. 19, 24.

waters of Meribah] *i.e.* "of strife," but the word is used as a proper name. See Exod. xvii. 6, 7.

10. *open thy mouth wide*] See Ps. xxxvii. 4; Eph. iii. 20. The promise may include all wants spiritual and temporal, though it refers primarily to bodily sustenance.

12. *their own hearts' lust*] Or, "to the stubbornness of their hearts," Deut. xxix. 19.

counsels] The word is generally taken in the bad sense of human counsels apart from and opposed to the divine. Mic. vi. 16.

14. *soon*] Or, "in a little;" that would have been a sure, natural, and easy result.

their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

15 The haters of the LORD should have ‖†submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.

‖ Or, *yielded feigned obedience.* † Heb. *lied.*

16 He should have fed them also †with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

† Heb. *with the fat of wheat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1 *The psalmist, having exhorted the judges,* 5 *and reproved their negligence,* 8 *prayeth God to judge.*

A Psalm ‖of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

GOD standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and *a*accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

a Deut. 1. 17.

3 †Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

† Heb. *Judge.*

4 *b*Deliver the poor and needy: rid *them* out of the hand of the wicked.

b Prov. 24 11.

5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are †out of course.

† Heb. *moved.*

6 *c*I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the most High.

c John 10. 34.

7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

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15. *have submitted*] See marg., and note on Ps. xviii. 44.

16. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 13, 14; Job xxix. 6.

PSALM LXXXII.

Asaph denounces the injustice, corruption, and ignorance of the judges of Israel, and threatens them with destruction. In the first verse he represents the Almighty as sitting in judgment, in the last he calls on Him to judge the earth. The psalm has bold and remarkable expressions, and the style is pure, compact, and vigorous, but there are no certain indications of date. It may have been written under one of the kings of Judah, either by the elder Asaph at a period of general corruption, as in the reign of Rehoboam; or by a descendant bearing the same name, on the eve of a vigorous reformation, such as that ushered in by Asa, and accomplished by Jehoshaphat; see 2 Chro. xv. 8—19, xix. 4—11.

The division into two parts, each of four verses, is distinctly marked; but the strophes are irregular and somewhat abrupt, in accordance with the general tone of the psalm.

1. *In the congregation of the mighty*] Rather, **In the assembly of El**, *i.e.* of the Almighty, not, as our A.V. implies, in the congregation of the princes of the earth. By "assembly of El" must be understood the assembly called by the supreme God; it consists of beings called here, as elsewhere, Elohim in a subordinate sense, as partakers of a divine nature.

he judgeth among the gods] A name which here seems to designate the angels; see 1 K. xxii. 19; 2 Chro. xviii. 18, and Job i. 6; Dan. vii. 9, 10. Two explanations are generally given; each open to grave objections doctrinal and exegetical. The one assumes that the mighty and "the gods" are earthly judges (see Jehoshaphat's charge, 2 Chro. xix); the other that the address which follows is spoken by God Himself, and directed against the angels put in charge of the earth. The scriptural and most rational account appears to be that in this first verse the Psalmist represents God as holding a court of judgment in heaven surrounded by the divine ministers who will execute His behests; see 1 K. xxii. 19; Job i. 6. This is a more lively and poetical introduction than an appeal to the God of judgment, though equivalent to such an appeal in practical significance.

2. This and the rest of the psalm is addressed by Asaph, in the name of the God of judgment, to the unrighteous judges of Israel. The evils are those denounced by all the prophets. "Accept the persons," a common expression for undue partiality; see Ex. xxiii. 2; Lev. xix. 15; Deut. i. 17; James ii. 1.

3. *Defend*] Or, "judge," as in the marg.; cf. Ps. x. 14; Job xxix. 12.

4. *rid*] Or, "deliver," as in Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

5. *They know not, neither will they understand*] Ps. xiv. 4, liii. 4; cf. Mic. iii. 1.

they walk on in darkness] Prov. ii. 13.

The last clause should be rendered, "All the foundations of the earth **are shaken**;" a similar expression in Ps. xi. 3 refers to the disturbance of the fundamental principles on which the administration of justice rests.

6. *I have said*] The meaning appears to be, "I," *i.e.* the Psalmist, "I, for my part, said, Ye are Gods, and sons of the Almighty, all of you," representatives of God, sharing in a peculiar sense His very attributes. The name of God in this sense is certainly attributed to earthly judges (Ex. xxi. 6; 1 Sam. ii.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1 *A complaint to God of the enemies' conspiracies.* 9 *A prayer against them that oppress the church.*

A Song *or* Psalm [1] of Asaph.

[1] Or, *for Asaph.*

KEEP not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

2 For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.

3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

5 For they have consulted together with one [†]consent: they are confederate against thee:

[†] Heb. *heart.*

6 The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;

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25), and it is so used by our Lord (see ref.), who quotes the passage to prove that the usage is not blasphemous. Hupfeld, who disregards *that* authority, supposes that God is thus addressing the angels, and threatening them with *death* (privation of immortality) in the following verse. The Psalmist expresses the profound reverence entertained by Israelites, and justified by the divine law, towards the vicegerents and representatives of God on earth.

children of the most High] See Ps. lxxxix. 27.

7. *like men*] Literally, **like Adam**, which may either mean share the common lot of mortality, or, with a more pointed reference, like Adam when he violated the conditions on which he held life; cf. Job xxxi. 33; Hos. vi. 7.

of the princes] The princes who had been cut off as enemies of God, probably with special allusion (as in the following psalm, *v.* 11) to the Midianitish princes: two examples are thus held up—the one of Adam, the son of God in a special sense by creation, who died for disobedience, and the other of sinners cut off in their antagonism to God.

8. *shalt inherit*] Or, "art Lord." The word means that all nations are actually the heritage of the God of Israel, He is the Lord and Judge of the whole earth (thus Luther, quoted by Hupfeld, *bist Erbherr*); hence the force of the appeal, as in Gen. xviii. 25. This verse, however, may with perfect propriety be understood to refer to the personal manifestation of God in Christ.

Psalm LXXXIII.

This psalm describes a powerful confederation against the kingdom, of which the principal leaders are Edom, Moab, Ammon, certain Arabian tribes, supported by the Philistines, Tyrians, and Assyrians. The mention of Amalek proves that the psalm belongs to the period before the captivity, since the Amalekites were destroyed by the Simeonites before that time. Nearly all ancient and many modern commentators (Tholuck, De Wette, Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, Himpel, Kay) hold that the confederacy of the Moabites and Ammonites and others, described in 2 Chro. xx. 5—12, gave occasion to the psalm. The great terror of Jehoshaphat and the people, the express mention of Mount Seir, and the result brought about by a division between the incongruous elements, confirm this view; nor is it at all impossible that the psalm may have been written by Jahaziel, "a Levite of the sons of Asaph," who was moved by the Spirit of God to promise a complete deliverance, 2 Chro. xx. 14—17. The mention of the Assyrians, not as leaders, but as encouragers, of the confederacy of the Philistines and Tyrians, will be considered in the notes. We find the Edomites, Philistines, and Arabians active in hostility in the reign of Jehoshaphat's successor.

The division is marked by Selah: the strophes have each four verses, except the last, which has six, expanding the leading thought.

2. *lifted up the head*] See Judg. viii. 28. The expression in both passages denotes a revolt; see the next note.

3. *crafty counsel*] The word implies secrecy. The movement originated among people partially or wholly subject to Judah.

4. *let us cut them off from being a nation*] Cf. 2 Chro. xx. 11, and comp. Jer. xxxi. 36; John xi. 48.

6. *The tabernacles of Edom*] The nomad tribes of Edom: they are named as leaders in the passage of Chronicles, quoted in the preceding note, under the designation of Mount Seir, *v.* 10. The Ishmaelites occupied, according to Gen. xxv. 18, the districts between Yemen and Assyria. They are not mentioned expressly by the Chronicler, who speaks (*v.* 1) in general terms of "others beside the Ammonites."

Hagarenes] "They dwell in their tents throughout all the land from east of Gilead" to the Persian Gulf; see 1 Chro. v. 10, and *vv.* 18—22. That account explains the reason both of the enmity of the Hagarenes (who had been expelled by the Reubenites in the time of Saul), and of the subordinate position assigned to them in this passage.

7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

8 Assur also is joined with them: †they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah.

† Heb. *they have been an arm to the children of Lot.*

9 Do unto them as *unto* the [a]Midianites; as *to* [b]Sisera, as *to* Jabin, at the brook of Kison:

[a] Judges 7. 22. [b] Judges 4. 15, 24.

10 *Which* perished at En-dor: they became *as* dung for the earth.

11 Make their nobles like [c]Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna:

[c] Judges 7. 25. & 8. 21.

12 Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

13 O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind.

14 As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire;

15 So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

16 Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

17 Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:

18 That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* the most high over all the earth.

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 *The prophet, longing for the communion of the sanctuary,* 4 *sheweth how blessed they are that dwell therein.* 8 *He prayeth to be restored unto it.*

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah.

‖ Or, *of.*

HOW amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

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7. *Gebal*] A tract of Edom south of the Dead Sea. See Josh. xiii. 5; Ezek. xxvii. 9.

Philistines and Tyrians are named by Amos, i. 6, 9, as allies of Edom in wars against Israel. The hostility of the latter people was felt as peculiarly cruel, on account of the old "brotherly covenant" with the house of David. It is probable that on this occasion they sent reinforcements.

8. *Assur*] Assur is mentioned as supporting the confederacy, not as taking a leading position; their support of the Moabites and Ammonites is evidently regarded by the Psalmist as a remarkable event. It is the first indication of any movement of the Assyrian power in that direction. The incidental notice shews that as yet that great nation had not attracted the special attention of the Israelites. The mention of Assur is conclusive against the hypothesis of the Maccabean date.

they have holpen] Lit. "been an arm," implies that they were auxiliaries, not leaders, on this occasion.

9. The allusion to the Midianites has a peculiar fitness in reference to an expected invasion by vast hordes of nomad tribes: for the history see Judg. iv. v. and vii.

11. *Make their nobles*] Oreb and Zeeb were princes, *i.e.* nobles, or military commanders; Zebah and Zalmunna kings or sheikhs of Midianitish nations; see note on Judg. viii. 12.

12. *the houses of God*] Or, "the dwellings of God," (as in Ps. xxiii. 2, pastures, or homesteads); the districts which are the special heritage of God's people. The war had not, as our A.V. would imply, any special religious character.

13. *wheel*] The translation is literal, but the word means **whirlwind**, or, rather, the sand caught up and hurled along by the whirlwind; thus Isai. xvii. 13; an admirable figure of the flight of a panic-stricken army.

stubble] Ps. i. 4; Job xiii. 25; Isai. v. 24.

14. Or, **As fire consumeth a forest, and as flame burneth mountains**: the last words represent the rapid progress of flame through the brushwood on mountain-sides; cf. Deut. xxxii. 22, and the two expressions τρόχος and ὕλη in James iii. 5, 6.

15. *persecute...tempest*] Job ix. 27, xxi. 18.

16. *with shame*] The ignominy of a frustrated attempt. Job x. 15.

that they may seek thy name] This is a feeling altogether peculiar to God's people. The object of all the judgments which the true prophet desires is to bring all nations into subjection to God. Their calamities will be converted into blessings, unless they persist in rebellion: in that case the curses denounced in the last verse must be accomplished. Their knowledge will but seal their condemnation: cf. Pss. lix. 13, lxxxvi. 10, and the close of xviii.

18. *the most high*] Comp. the prayer of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chro. xx. 6.

PSALM LXXXIV.

This introduces another set of psalms by the sons of Korah, all of them closely resembling those in the preceding book, which are attributed to the same authors. Like them (see especially xlii.) it describes the longing of the Psalmist for the solemnities of the temple-service; but it is fuller of hope, and appears to have been written when he contemplated a

2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

4 Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

5 Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee; in whose heart *are* the ways *of them*.

6 *Who* passing through the valley [1]of Baca make it a well; the rain also [†]filleth the pools.

7 They go [1]from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God.

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

10 For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. [†]I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my

[1] Or, *of mulberry trees make him a well*, &c.
[†] Heb. *covereth*.
[1] Or, *from company to company*.
[†] Heb. *I would choose rather to sit at the threshold*.

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speedy restoration to his old avocations. It may belong to the period immediately after the suppression of Absalom's rebellion; or, possibly, to some other period under the kings of Judah; certainly before the captivity, since the national sanctuary was standing.

The division of the psalm into three equal parts, each of four lines, is distinctly marked by Selah, *vv.* 4, 8.

1. *thy tabernacles*] Or, "Thy dwellings;" *i.e.* the sanctuary, whether tabernacle or temple; probably the former; see note on Ps. xliii. 3, and cf. cxxxii. 7.

2. *My soul longeth*] Cf. Pss. xlii. 1, 2, lxiii. 1. Dr Kay observes, The LXX. have ἐπιποθεῖ, the word used by St Paul of the spirit's longing for "the house from heaven," 2 Cor. v. 2.

fainteth] Job xix. 27, where A.V. has "be consumed;" Ps. lxxiii. 26, "faileth:" the same word is used of the intense longing of David to see Absalom, 2 Sam. xiii. 39.

living God] See Ps. xlii. 2; that was the real object of the longing, the realization of God's presence.

3. *the sparrow*] The Psalmist feels like a wandering bird, homeless, until he finds a refuge in God's house. The latter half of the verse "even Thine altars," may be taken, as by our A.V., in apposition to "house;" but it appears rather to be an exclamation, as though the Psalmist would say "The birds have their houses; my refuge and home, the place in which my heart finds all its comfort, is the altar of God."

my King] Ps. v. 2, where see note.

5. The latter clause is rather obscure, literally "ways in their heart," but the meaning appears to be, Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are the ways to Jerusalem, blessed are they whose hearts are full of one thought, that they are drawing nearer to God's house. This verse suggested Herder's view, that the psalm was specially composed for pilgrims to the Holy City; but it is most appropriate in the mouth of a Levite on his way to the temple.

6. The general meaning is clear; "They whose strength is God, and whose heart is fixed on their journey to His house, passing through the dreariest valley find wells of spiritual comfort;" but the construction is difficult. The valley of Baca is either a proper name (Baca having an ambiguous sense, "mulberry-tree," or "balsam," or "weeping"), or more probably it means that any valley through which they pass, however dreary and desolate, naturally a very vale of bitter weeping, becomes to them a sweet fountain. The verse may be rendered "Passing through the valley of weeping they make it a fountain, the rain also fills it with blessing." They have an inward spring of joy which makes it a place of refreshment, for the favour of God falls on it like **the early rain**, *i.e.* the autumnal rain of seed-time. In favour of the rendering "mulberry-tree," or "balsam," for each of which there is good authority, it is to be observed that they grow in dry places. Thus Ew., Köster, and Hupfeld.

the rain also filleth the pools] Or, **the early rain clothes it with blessings:** thus nearly all commentators. Dr Kay refers to Ezek. xxxiv. 26; and observes that in 2 Chro. xx. 26, Jehoshaphat and the people praised God in the valley of *Berachah*, or "blessing."

7. *They go from strength to strength*] The journey instead of exhausting increases their powers.

9. *our shield*] An expression appropriate to David (cf. Pss. iii. 3, xxviii. 7, lix. 11). See also Gen. xv. 1.

thine anointed] *i.e.* The king, on whose prosperity depends that of the people: this is equally appropriate to David and to his successors on the throne: it has its highest meaning in the mouth of the Christian, who cares only to be seen and known in Christ.

God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: [a]no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

12 O LORD of hosts, [b]blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

[a] Ps. 34. 9, 10.
[b] Ps. 2. 12.

PSALM LXXXV.

1 *The psalmist, out of the experience of former mercies, prayeth for the continuance thereof.* 8 *He promiseth to wait thereon, out of confidence of God's goodness.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm [1]for the sons of Korah.

LORD, thou hast been [1]favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

2 [a]Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

3 Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: [1]thou hast turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.

4 Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

5 Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

6 Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

[1] Or, *of.*
[1] Or, *well pleased.*
[a] Ps. 32. 1.
[1] Or, *thou hast turned thine anger from waxing hot.*

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10. *a thousand*] *i.e.* any number elsewhere.

a doorkeeper] Or, "lie on the threshold," *i.e.* as a servant of the lowest order, but still ministering to the temple: the Korahites were *doorkeepers* in the temple, 1 Chro. xxvi. 13—19.

11. *a sun*] The only passage where God is directly so called, but the thought is frequently suggested, as in Isai. lx. 19; Mal. iv. 2; Rev. xxi. 23; see also Ps. xxvii. 1.

PSALM LXXXV.

The psalm begins with thanksgiving for deliverance and forgiveness of sin (1—5), and then suddenly turns to prayer for mercy and salvation (4—7): the concluding portion contains the divine promise of all spiritual and temporal blessings. The rapid alternations of thought and feeling are best accounted for on the supposition that the psalm was composed for public recitation shortly after the restoration of the people from captivity, when gratitude for that blessing was blended with a strong sense of their actual wants and sufferings, feelings which are then absorbed by a sure hope of the future accomplishment of all God's purposes for the redemption and salvation of Israel: the character of the concluding portion is essentially Messianic. Like other psalms attributed to the sons of Korah, this bears a striking resemblance to the latter portion of Isaiah.

It may however be observed that the psalm would be perfectly suitable to a period of deliverance, and very specially to the cessation of the servitude to Egypt, when Rehoboam humbled himself before God. 2 Chro. xii. 12.

The structure is peculiar, two strophes of six lines, with an intervening ejaculation, *v.* 7.

1. *brought back the captivity*] This expression does not prove that the psalm was written after the captivity, for it is used in many passages which describe deliverance from calamity (see note on Job xlii. 10); but it applies naturally to that period.

3. *all thy wrath*] Cf. 2 Chro. xii. 7.

turned thyself] This is nearer to the original than the marginal version, and expresses the exact meaning.

4. *Turn us*, &c.] The rapid and even abrupt change of thought seems to indicate a responsive or alternate recitation; while one half of the singers, representing the people, dwell wholly on the indications of grace and pardon, the other directs the thought to the need of a deep spiritual change in the recipients, which alone can secure the continuance and completion of God's gracious purposes. Such alternations are far from uncommon in the psalms. This portion of the psalm implies that the people were in a state of great distress and weakness, such as is described in Ezra and Nehemiah, and must have followed the Egyptian invasion under Rehoboam. The whole tone of this address is specially suitable to that time; compare *vv.* 5, 6 with Pss. lxxiv. 1, and lxxix. 5.

8. *I will hear*] The Psalmist, as is usual in prophetic writings (see Habakkuk ii. 1), represents himself as waiting for a divine answer to the prayers just offered: he then gives the purport of the answer as it is apprehended by his spirit.

unto his people, and to his saints] Compare the whole tenour of the pleading in Ps. lxxxix. 15—17.

to folly] such as that which brought on the visitation. The expression specially

9 Surely his salvation *is* nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yea, the LORD shall give *that which is* good; and our land shall yield her increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set *us* in the way of his steps.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1 *David strengtheneth his prayer by the conscience of his religion,* 5 *by the goodness and power of God.* 11 *He desireth the continuance of former grace.* 14 *Complaining of the proud, he craveth some token of God's goodness.*

[1] A Prayer of David.

[1] Or, *A Prayer, being a Psalm of David.*

BOW down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I *am* poor and needy.

2 Preserve my soul; for I *am* [1]holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.

3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee [1]daily.

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 [a]For thou, Lord, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

8 Among the gods *there is* none

[1] Or, *one whom thou favourest.*

[1] Or, *all the day*

[a] Joel 2. 13

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denotes presumptuous folly, that which is the result of prosperity and luxury; see the account of Rehoboam and the princes, in 2 Chro. xi. 23, and xii. 1.

10. *Mercy and truth*] See lxxxix. 14. The adaptation of this promise to the work of Christ is obvious; all such promises have an ideal or a Messianic character, partly apprehended by the prophetic spirit, and distinctly explained by the event. In the enumeration of graces the inner and eternal harmony of divine attributes, which in their partial manifestation appear, if not opposed, yet diverse, is represented as perfectly developed; a consummation which appertains entirely to the manifestation of God in Christ.

11. *Truth*] The meaning appears to be, the result of God's faithfulness to his covenant of grace will be abundance of the fruits of righteousness; in the outward sense, temporal prosperity, in the inner sense (which if not present to the Psalmist's mind, is involved in the divine promise), the spiritual gifts and graces which belong to the kingdom of God.

righteousness shall look down from heaven] Compare Isai. xlv. 8.

13. *Righteousness shall go before him*] Isai. lviii. 8.

and shall set us in the way of his steps] Lit. "and shall make His steps a way:" the meaning appears to be that righteousness, preparing the way for the restoration of the Lord's favour, will guide the people in the way marked out by His footsteps, the indications of His will. The personification of the attributes of God, Mercy, Truth and Righteousness, is a characteristic of the 89th psalm; see *vv.* 8, 14.

PSALM LXXXVI.

This is called a psalm of David in the inscription, but the expression does not always mean authorship, and in this instance critics of very different schools (Delitzsch, Hupfeld and Hengstenberg) generally agree that we have the production of another author, probably an adaptation of the Davidic psalmody to liturgical usage. There is, however, no certain indication of a later period either in the subject-matter or the style; Dr Kay accepts it as a psalm of David, and Köster admits this to be very probable.

The structure resembles that of the preceding Korahite psalm; two strophes each of seven verses, with an intervening strophe (8—10) of three unequal verses.

1. *Bow down*, &c.] Common expressions in Davidic psalms; see Pss. xvii. 6, xxxi. 2, &c.

I am poor and needy] Pss. xl. 17, lxx. 5; see also xxxv. 10, xxxvii. 14.

2. *I am holy*] The Hebrew word is equivalent to "saint" in the New Testament (see note on Ps. l. 5); but with this difference, that ἅγιος in the New Testament is never used of one individual Christian; here it simply expresses the Psalmist's conviction that he is one of God's people, a child of grace.

4. *lift up my soul*] Ps. xxv. 1.

8. *Among the gods*] The expression is taken from Exod. xv. 11, and is frequently

like unto thee, O Lord; [b]neither *are there any works* like unto thy works.

[b] Deut. 3. 24.

9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.

10 For thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things: [c]thou *art* God alone.

11 [d]Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

[c] Deut. 6. 4. & 32. 39. Isai. 37. 16. & 44. 6. Mark 12. 29. 1 Cor. 8. 4. Ephes. 4. 6.

[d] Ps. 25. 4. & 119. 33.

12 I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For great *is* thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest [1]hell.

[1] Or, *grave.*

14 O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of [†]violent *men* have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.

[†] Heb. *terrible.*

15 [e]But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

[e] Exod. 34. 6. Numb. 14. 18. Ps. 103. 8. & 130. 4. & 145. 8.

16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see *it*, and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1 *The nature and glory of the church.* 4 *The increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof.*

A Psalm *or* Song [1]for the sons of Korah.

[1] Or, *of.*

HIS foundation *is* in the holy mountains.

2 The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

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repeated or imitated in the psalms, *e.g.* lxxxix. 6, lxxi. 19, lxxvii. 13, xcv. 3.

9. *All nations*] See note on Ps. xxii. 31. The Psalmist's belief in the future conversion of the heathen rests on two grounds, the creation of man by God, and the manifestations of His power.

11. *unite my heart*] A beautiful prayer which includes singleness of heart, a heart having no object but God, and a complete unison in all its powers and aspirations. Compare Jer. xxxii. 39, and Deut. vi. 5, x. 12.

13. *from the lowest hell*] Or, **from hell beneath**, the original "Sheol" means here as elsewhere the abode of the departed, which is always represented as subterranean, doubtless with special reference to the buried body, though the word is not (as our marg. makes it) equivalent to the grave. The thanksgiving refers to deliverance from some great danger. See note on Ps. xvi. 10.

14. *the proud .... violent*] Better than "the terrible" in the margin.

15. The Psalmist appeals to God's own declaration in Exod. xxxiv. 6. Compare Num. xiv. 18, Joel ii. 13, also Jonah iv. 2.

16. *the son of thine handmaid*] The expression doubtless implies that the Psalmist, like Timothy, owed his first religious impressions and training to his mother's care; it may also shew that the ground of his hope is that from childhood he has belonged to God's own family, His servant by birth.

17. *a token*] A proof of divine favour, not necessarily, or indeed probably, a miraculous intervention, but help and comfort.

PSALM LXXXVII.

The Messianic character of this beautiful psalm, which declares the nature and glory of the Church, and the increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof, is recognized by all modern commentators. It bears a close resemblance to the prophecies of Isaiah which describe the future conversion of the bitterest enemies of Zion. See ch. ii. 2—4, xi. 10, xviii. xix. 23—25, xx. and xxiii. Hence it has been referred, with great probability, to the time of Hezekiah, but the date is uncertain; it can scarcely have been written after the return from Babylon. See notes on *v.* 1.

The division into two strophes is marked by Selah, *vv.* 3, 6; with an epiphonema, or ejaculatory verse at the close.

1. The glory of Zion is that God hath founded it, and sanctified the mountains on which it is built by His presence. Hupfeld alters the construction slightly, and reads, "Jehovah loveth His foundation on the holy mountains."

the holy mountains] This applies to the whole city of Jerusalem, which was built on several distinct heights.

2. *the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob*] This clause evidently implies a comparison between Zion and other places, where God had specially manifested Himself, or where the ark had rested, and it seems consequently to belong to an early period,

3 Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

4 I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this *man* was born there.

5 And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.

6 The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, *that* this *man* was born there. Selah.

7 As well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there:* all my springs *are* in thee.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

A prayer containing a grievous complaint.

A Song *or* Psalm [1]for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, [1]Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.

O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day *and* night before thee:

[1] Or, *of.*

[1] Or, A Psalm *of Heman the Ezrahite, giving instruction.*

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before the overthrow of Israel, and the old sanctuaries of Shiloh and Bethel. See Ps. lxxviii. 60, 67.

3. *Glorious things*] The Psalmist refers either to the old promises and predictions of the eternal duration and future glory of the Holy City, or more probably to the declaration of the Almighty in the following verses.

4. These are the words of the Almighty speaking by the Psalmist. Our A. V. obscures the meaning. The passage should be rendered:

I will name Rahab and Babylon among them that know me.
Behold Philistia and Tyre, with Cush:
This man was born there.

That is, God will bring about the entire conversion of the oldest and most bitter enemies of Israel, and count them among His own people, who know Him, and are known of Him: of each converted individual, descendant though he be of the accursed Ham, God will say, "this man is born in Zion, admitted to all the privileges of the children of Israel." This declaration is one of the strongest found in the prophetical writings. It does not speak of the subjugation, much less of the overthrow, of the enemies of Zion, but of their free admission to every blessing upon their conversion. It is satisfactory that this interpretation is given by Hupfeld. Rahab, as usual, is equivalent to Egypt. The mention of Babylon may point to a time after the exile; but that city must previously have been well known to the Psalmist as the stronghold of idolatry; and the captivity of Judah was predicted by Isaiah, ch. xxxix. 6, and by Micah, iv. 10.

5. *And of Zion*] Or, **And to Zion.** The Psalmist represents the Almighty as presenting every convert to the holy city, and saying, "This and this, one and all, belong to thee, every one is thy own child." Such, in fact, is the exact language of God to the Church, the true Zion, in which alone promises and predictions have an adequate and perfect fulfilment.

shall establish her] This promise secures the perpetuity of the Church after it has become the home or mother of the converted Gentiles.

6. *when he writeth up*] Cf. Exod. xxxii. 32; Ps. lxix. 28; Phil. iv. 3. This is a repetition of the preceding promise: it would seem to be needed to remove all shadow of doubt. God is represented as holding a general census of the Gentile world, and declaring of each individual, who is admitted into covenant, "This man is a true child of Zion, the birthright is become his."

7. This verse seems to express the joy of the converted Gentiles, who are represented as coming in a procession with singing and choral dancing unto Zion, and there one and all exclaiming "All my fresh springs, *i.e.* all sources of life and joy, are in thee."

the players on instruments] Or, "dancers;" the words may be rendered, "And singers with dancers (will say), All my springs are in thee."

PSALM LXXXVIII.

The Bible has no poem which represents personal anguish in language more utterly desponding than this psalm, attributed in the inscription to Heman the Ezrahite. There is one word of trust, inseparable from inward hopefulness, in the beginning; the Psalmist knows that the Lord is the God of his salvation; but that word occurs but once, and finds no echo in the succeeding strains. Death is nigh at hand (3), all strength exhausted (4); as one already occupying the grave (5) the sufferer lies in darkness, overwhelmed by God's wrath (6); forsaken of all friends, an object of loathing to them, shut up in prison (8), he is still praying, urgently and without ceasing (9 and 13), yet finds no response; from his youth ever on the point of death, distracted by the terrors of God, crushed by His fierce wrath, he lies now without lover or friend, with but one acquaintance left, even the darkness of Sheol.

It has been supposed (by Kimchi and Rosenmüller) that the sufferings of the nation

2 Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

3 For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

4 I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man *that hath* no strength:

5 Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off [1] from thy hand.

[1] Or, *by the hand.*

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in exile are represented; but the traits are strictly personal; hence some have suggested that Uzziah, smitten with leprosy (see note on *v.* 5), or Hezekiah in his mortal sickness, may have been the author; but some expressions (see *v.* 15) are not applicable to either of these princes, or to Jeremiah, whose name has also been suggested. We have the portraiture of an individual, highly gifted, but subjected to every affliction which can try a faithful servant of God.

Heman is mentioned in 1 K. iv. 31, as a contemporary of Solomon, remarkable for wisdom, in conjunction with Ethan the Ezrahite. Both names are borne also by Levites, who, together with Asaph, were "set over the service of song" in the sanctuary by David, 1 Chro. vi. 33—44: whether Heman, a Kohathite, and Ethan, a Merarite, could also be called Ezrahites, is questioned, but Levites in some instances, as in that of Elkanah (1 S. i. 1), from whom Heman was descended, took the name of the district in which they settled, probably also of the family into which they were adopted, and the assumption of such a change of designation in the case of Heman and Ethan seems far more probable than that both should have borne the same names with distinguished contemporaries.

The supposition that this psalm was written within a few years after the death of Solomon is in itself probable, and accepted by many critics, *e.g.* Kay, Delitzsch, Moll. It was a period of severe trial to the sons of Korah; the disruption of the kingdom, the faithlessness of Rehoboam (2 Chro. xii. 1), followed by the invasion of Shishak, and the total, though temporary, subjection of all Judæa (Chro. l. c. *v.* 8), might well give intensity to anguish connected, as it would seem, with personal and long-continued affliction. The familiarity, moreover, of the writer with the book of Job, (so striking that Delitzsch would even suggest that he may have been its true author,) though shared by other Psalmists, is peculiarly characteristic of the Solomonian period. Some critics hold that this and the following psalm were written at the same time, which is very probable, and also that they were intended to be recited in succession; a supposition which appears untenable, considering the difference not merely of tone but of subject-matter, the one dealing with national events, the other with strictly personal misery.

The structure of the psalm is irregular, without the relief of distinct strophic change, a slow unbroken wail, the monotony of woe. The divisions, marked by Selah, *vv.* 7 and 10, are unequal.

for the sons of Korah] The double inscription may possibly be referred to a tradition of doubtful authority. If correct, it may be assumed that the sons of Korah were entrusted with the recitation of the psalm.

Mahalath Leannoth] On Machalath, see Ps. liii.

Leannoth] *i. e.* "for singing," or "for humbling." The probable meaning is, a psalm of deep affliction to be recited with a fitting accompaniment.

1. *O Lord God of my salvation*] An expression of absolute trust; whatever may betide, that remains unshaken; cf. Ps. xxvii. 9.

I have cried day and night] The construction is broken. Lit. "day I have cried. by night before Thee;" expressive, as Dr Kay rightly suggests, of the Psalmist's trouble, gasping, so to speak, for utterance.

3. *is full of troubles*] Full .... to satiety; thus Job x. 15, where the same word is used.

unto the grave] "to Sheol," as in Ps. xvi. 10.

4. *go down into the pit*] See Ps. xxviii. 1.

no strength] The Hebrew word, which is somewhat peculiar, implies utter failure of bodily power, the man is become a mere shadow.

5. *Free among the dead*] This interpretation follows the old versions, and is probably correct. The meaning is, free from all earthly duties, as a hireling from his master, Job iii. 19, cf. vii. 1, Exod. xxi. 2; thus too Rom. vi. 7. To this it is objected, though somewhat unfairly, that the word is elsewhere taken in a good sense only, and modern critics generally prefer the rendering "dismissed," from human society, a sense quite justified by the etymology, confirmed by the following clause, and above all by the expression 2 K. xv. 5, "in a several house," *i. e.* a lazar-house, in which Uzziah passed the last years of his life. The Hebrew word is the same in both passages. A meaning quite different from this is suggested by the Arabic, "prostrate," and many critics would render the passage, "my couch is among the dead," with special reference to Job xvii. 13, a passage which was undoubtedly present to the Psalmist's mind; see note on the last word in the psalm.

6 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.

7 Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted *me* with all thy waves. Selah.

8 Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: *I am* shut up, and I cannot come forth.

9 Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

10 Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise *and* praise thee? Selah.

11 Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulness in destruction?

12 Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

13 But unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

14 LORD, why castest thou off my soul? *why* hidest thou thy face from me?

15 I *am* afflicted and ready to die from *my* youth up: *while* I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.

16 Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.

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whom thou rememberest no more] In other psalms, vi. 5, xxx. 9, the suspension of man's power to praise God is dwelt on; but this points to a far deeper affliction, the suspension of God's care and remembrance of the dead in Sheol, "the land of forgetfulness," *v.* 12. See notes on Job x. 21, 22.

cut off from thy hand] Cf. Job xii. 10; Isai. liii. 8; and Ps. xxxi. 22.

6. Each expression in this verse is applied in other passages to the grave, or to Sheol; see especially the note on Job x. 21.

in the deeps] As in Ps. lxix. 15, the abyss is meant, equivalent to "Abaddon" in *v.* 11.

7. *Thy wrath lieth hard upon me*] Other sufferings are represented in figurative terms; the one great cause is the pressure of God's wrath: cf. xxxii. 4.

all thy waves] See Ps. xlii. 7. (The construction is peculiar; LXX. have ἐπήγαγες, and all the ancient versions appear to have had a word with the meaning "brought on.")

8. *Thou hast put away*, &c.] Compare Ps. xxx. 11; Job xix. 13, 14.

an abomination] Job xxx. 10.

I am shut up] Cf. Job iii. 23, xiii. 27, xix. 8, and elsewhere; the expressions in this verse are all specially applicable to a leper, but may be, and probably ought to be, understood figuratively; the imprisonment, and the inability to go out, imply utter prostration, but (as in the case of Job, xxxi. 34) not necessarily external restraint.

9. *Mine eye mourneth*] Ps. vi. 7; Job xvii. 7.

10. *wonders*] Cf. Exod. xv. 11.

shall the dead arise] Isai. xxvi. 14. The Hebrew word *rephaim* is used by Job in a passage to which the Psalmist seems to refer, xxvi. 5; where see note. It denotes wan, shadowy, forms of the once mighty dead; cf. Isai. xiv. 9, 10. The question applies not to a future resurrection, but to the possibility of their rising up in that state to praise God.

11. *Shall thy lovingkindness*] The plea for prolonged life thus rests upon a deep feeling of God's love; the answer however was reserved for a future revelation. The accumulation of expressions is noticeable, "the grave" or **sepulchre**; "destruction" or "Abaddon," as in Job xxvi. 6, xxviii. 22 (the word occurs elsewhere only in Job, and in Prov. xv. 11); "the dark," as in Job x. 21; "the land of forgetfulness," in the twofold sense, where the dead have no remembrance, and where they are wholly forgotten; see note on *v.* 5, and cf. xxxi. 12, and Eccles. ix. 5.

13. The word "I" is strongly emphasized in the Hebrew, marking a sudden turn of thought, "and yet I have cried," &c.; it represents an earnest expostulation.

prevent] A beautiful and true rendering; the morning-prayer would still be offered, as it were to anticipate the grace which it could not fail to win.

14. *why hidest thou*, &c.] Thus Job xiii. 24, "Wherefore hidest thou thy face?" cf. Ps. xiii. 1.

15. *ready to die from my youth up*] Or, "dying from my youth." The word "dying" implies in a dying state, perishing, not merely with reference to the common destiny of man, but as one afflicted with a life-long malady. Such may have been the personal experience of the Psalmist; it is difficult to understand it as used of Israel (Dr Kay), and it is certainly not applicable to Hezekiah, or to Jeremiah.

while I suffer, &c.] Rather, "I have borne Thy terrors; I am distracted:" see Job vi. 4, ix. 34, xiii. 21. The exact meaning of the last word, which occurs here only, is disputed. It evidently denotes the effects of long-con-

17 They came round about me [1]daily like water; they compassed me about together.

[1] Or, *all the day.*

18 Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, *and* mine acquaintance into darkness.

PSALM LXXXIX.

1 *The psalmist praiseth God for his covenant,* 5 *for his wonderful power,* 15 *for the care of his church,* 19 *for his favour to the kingdom of David.* 38 *Then complaining of contrary events,* 46 *he expostulateth, prayeth, and blesseth God.*

[1]Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

[1] Or, A Psalm *for Ethan the Ezrahite, to give instruction.*

I WILL sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness [†]to all generations.

[†] Heb. *to generation and generation.*

2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

3 I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have [a]sworn unto David my servant,

[a] 2 Sam. 7. 11, &c.

4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne [†]to all generations. Selah.

[†] Heb. *to generation and generation.*

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tinued mental anguish, most probably utter exhaustion and confusion of spirit. The LXX. have ἐξηπορήθην. An Arabic etymology is suggested, but is doubtful. The grammatical form of the word indicates a giving way of the will.

16. *Thy fierce wrath*] Lit. "wraths;" the expression represents the overflowing of burning streams.

thy terrors have cut me off] Both words, "terrors" and "cut me off," belong in Hebrew to the style of Job; the former occurs vi. 4, and there only; the latter, though in a different form (here a very peculiar one), in Job vi. 17, xxiii. 17.

17. *They came round about me*] Sc. the floods of wrath, *v.* 16.

they compassed me] Cf. Ps. xviii. 4.

18. *Lover and friend*] See *v.* 8, and cf. Ps. xxxviii. 11.

and mine acquaintance into darkness] Or, **mine intimates—darkness.** The only companion he has to count upon is the darkness of the grave; thus Job xvii. 14, "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister." This forcible and affecting figure is generally recognized as the true meaning of the passage by modern critics. In connection with the preceding verses, from 13 onwards, it represents the two great characteristics of the psalm, utter hopelessness of deliverance, and intensity of faith finding expression to the last in prayer.

PSALM LXXXIX.

The inscription assigns this psalm to Ethan the Ezrahite, the colleague of Asaph and Heman. Supposing it to have been composed towards the end of his life, some few years after the death of Solomon, every portion of the psalm finds a perfect explanation in the circumstances of that period.

It is written not by the king, but by one closely connected with him; by a man specially conversant with the divine promises and terms of the covenant with the family of David. The king had been subjected to severest chastisement, an object of God's wrath, *v.* 38; his crown had been dishonoured, 39; the frontiers of his territory had been broken down, his strongholds ruined, his adversaries had prevailed and triumphed over him, his attempts at resistance had failed at once and ignominiously, his glory had passed away, his throne was cast down, old age has come on him in early manhood, he is covered with shame. Each of these points tallies exactly with the facts recorded of the invasion of Shishak, whose enormous army overran the whole country, destroyed the strongholds which had been fortified by Rehoboam, and who reduced the kingdom for a time to a state of vassalage, which is expressly stated to have been a punishment for the sins of the princes, and to have effected its object; for when the king "humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned from him;" for "yet in Judah there were good things;" see 2 Chro. xii. 1—12; especially *vv.* 4, 5, 8, and 12, marg. The tone of hopefulness, which, notwithstanding the terrible suffering, pervades the psalm, is thus accounted for, and is strikingly unlike the forebodings of the prophets who were commissioned to announce the ruin of the descendants of Josiah, especially of Jehoiachin, of whom it was expressly said, no more of his seed should "prosper, sitting on the throne of David." See Jer. xxii. 24—30.

The date here assigned is admirably defended by Waterland, Vol. IV. p. 316 ff., and accepted by Bishop Wordsworth and Delitzsch; it accords with the interpretation of other psalms, lxxiv., lxxix., which are referred to the same events in these notes.

The metrical system is highly artistic, such as might be expected from a leader of the Levitical choirs in his advanced age. At the beginning and the end we have severally one division (1—19, 38—51), each with three subdivisions. In the middle the promises of David occupy two parts, 19—37, divided at *v.* 29. The movement throughout is solemn and majestic.

5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

6 For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him.

8 O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

9 Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

10 Thou hast broken ‖Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies †with thy strong arm.

11 [b]The heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: *as for* the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

12 The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

13 Thou hast †a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand.

14 Justice and judgment *are* the ‖habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

‖ Or, *Egypt.*
† Heb. *with the arm of thy strength.*
[b] Gen. 1. 1 Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 12.
† Heb. *an arm with might.*
‖ Or, *establishment.*

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1. *mercies*] The two words "mercies" and "faithfulness" are the refrain of the psalm; all the hope of the people rests on the "sure mercies of David," Isai. lv. 3, and "the faithfulness" of God, in adhering to His covenant; the latter word recurs in *vv.* 2, 5, 8, 24, 33, see also *v.* 37, note.

2. *shall be built up*] Notwithstanding the overthrow of the king's throne, *v.* 44, it shall be built up and established, *v.* 4, by God's mercy and faithfulness, which by a fine metonymy are thus represented as themselves maintained.

in the very heavens] *i.e.* conspicuous as the sun, and the moon, see *v.* 37.

3. *chosen*] Thus 1 K. viii. 16, "I chose David to be over my people Israel."

I have sworn] *Vv.* 35, 49; see 2 S. vii. 8—16.

5. *the congregation of the saints*] This refers to the assembly of angels, as in Job v. 1, xv. 15. In this and the two following verses the Psalmist refers, with unusual fulness of expression, to the dwellers in heaven. The object is evidently, in the name of the king and of the princes, to declare a formal renunciation of the superstitions into which they had fallen. No mention is here made of false gods, but it is declared that the one office of the heavens and all their hosts is to proclaim the wonders of the Lord, and to acknowledge in reverence and fear His "greatness beyond compare and power divine."

6. *sons of the mighty*] Thus Ps. xxix. 1.

7. *the assembly of the saints*] *i.e.* "the council of the angels:" the two words "congregation" and "council" differ in so far as the one only describes the act, the other the purpose, of their assembling, when "the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord." Job i. 6.

that are about him] Another designation of the angels; cf. Ps. ciii. 20, 21.

8. *O LORD God of hosts*] An appellation used here with special reference to the preceding verses.

like unto thee] Cf. Exod. xv. 11, to which there is an evident reference in this passage; thus for "Lord" the Hebrew has "Jah," as in Exod. xv. 2.

9. *the raging of the sea*] Here, as in numerous passages, representing the wild uproar of invading hosts, Pss. xlvi. 3, lxv. 7. Cf. Job xxvi. 12, xxxviii. 10, 11.

10. *Rahab*] See notes on Job ix. 13, xxvi. 12. The application to Egypt is indisputable in other passages, *e.g.* Ps. lxxxvii. 4, Isai. li. 9. May not this mystical name have been first used in this passage, suggesting the sure overthrow of the invaders of the land, and plunderers of the sanctuary? Hence the special fitness of the words *thine enemies.*

12. The mention of Tabor and Hermon may refer to the occupation of the land of which they are no unfitting representatives, as its most conspicuous and commanding objects; they will yet rejoice in a perfect deliverance. Considering, however, that the north and south have been named, they may severally designate the east and west of Palestine.

14. *the habitation*] Or, **foundation**; Ps. xcvii. 2.

go before thy face] Not in the sense of preceding, but of standing in the presence of God; the two great attributes of the Lord God are, so to speak, personified, thus adumbrating the doctrine to be revealed, Mercy incarnate in the Son, Truth disclosed in the Spirit, that "leadeth into all truth." May not this explain Zech. iv. 14?

15 Blessed *is* the people that know the [c]joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.

16 In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17 For thou *art* the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

18 For [1]the LORD *is* our defence; and the Holy One of Israel *is* our king.

19 Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people.

20 [d]I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

21 With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.

22 The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

23 And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.

24 But my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

25 I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

26 He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

27 Also I will make him *my* first-

[c] Numb. 10. 6.

[1] Or, *our shield is of the LORD, and our king is of the Holy One of Israel.*

[d] 1 Sam. 16. 12.

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15. *that know the joyful sound*] The expression is specific, *teruah*, the sound of "the blowing of trumpets," Lev. xxiii. 24, xxv. 9. See note on Ps. lxxxi. 1. The Psalmist refers to the peculiar privileges of Judah, which retained the full Levitical services in the sanctuary, under the personal superintendence of himself and his two colleagues, Asaph and Heman. This continuous celebration was a pledge of blessing; so long as it was retained the covenant was valid. Thus in Ps. xxvii. 6, David declares that he will offer "sacrifices of joy" (*teruah*), accompanied by the sound of sacred instruments.

they shall walk] As a result of their devotion they will have the light of God's countenance shining on them; with an evident reference to the priestly blessing, Num. vi. 24—26. Cf. Ps. iv. 6.

17. *the glory of their strength*] With reference, probably, to His presence over the Ark, with which the word strength is specially connected. See note on Ps. xcvi. 6.

our horn] Thus *v.* 24; see 1 S. ii. 1.

18. *For the LORD is our defence*, &c.] Or, **For our shield** *belongeth* **to Jehovah; and our king to the Holy One of Israel.** The "shield" is the king himself, who holds his office, with its powers, as servant of the Lord: see Ps. xlvii. 9. This interpretation, which is adopted by nearly all critics (Hupf., Hitz., Del., Kay, Perowne), ought to settle points of great importance, (1) that the psalm was not written by the king himself; (2) that the kingdom was in existence, therefore that the psalm could not belong to the time during or after the exile; and (3) that the king was still in Jerusalem, not in captivity, a description which is specially applicable to Rehoboam. The reference to the shield may possibly have been suggested by the fact that Shishak "took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made," 1 K. xiv. 26. "Our shield belongs to the Lord," is the reflection of the Psalmist.

19. *Then thou spakest*] This introduces another division of the psalm; from general grounds of confidence it passes to direct pledges. The vision is that recorded in 1 Chro. xvii. 3—15. The holy one is probably David himself (cf. xvi. 10), to whom the vision was communicated: but the reading "Thy holy ones" has the authority of many MSS., and all the ancient versions (LXX., Vulg., Syr., Targ.). Thus Jerome, "quod omnes τοῖς ὁσίοις σου, id est *sanctis tuis*, transtulerunt." 'Ep. ad Lun. et Fret.' 57. Delitzsch understands it to refer both to Nathan and David. The second clause in *v.* 22 is taken almost verbatim from Nathan's vision, 2 S. vii. 10.

I have laid help] Thus Ps. xxi. 5, "honour and majesty hast Thou laid upon him:" "help" is here chosen with reference to the present need, and to the expression "shield" in *v.* 18.

mighty] A word applied to David, 2 S. xvii. 10.

chosen] See *v.* 3; 1 K. xi. 34.

20. *I have found*, &c.] Acts xiii. 22; 1 S. xvi. 12, 13.

21. *shall be established*] Ps. lxxx. 17.

22. *exact upon him*] Come upon him as an exacting creditor. May this refer to claims asserted by Shishak, founded on Solomon's obligations to his predecessors? See *e.g.* 1 K. ix. 16.

25. Cf. Ps. lxxii. 8: a promise claimed with special propriety on behalf of the son of Solomon.

26. *my father*] 2 S. vii. 14.

the rock of my salvation] Ps. xviii. 46; 2 S. xxii. 47.

born, higher than the kings of the earth.

28 My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

29 His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

30 If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

31 If they †break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

32 Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

33 Nevertheless my lovingkindness †will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness †to fail.

34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

35 Once have I sworn by my holiness †that I will not lie unto David.

36 [e]His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.

37 It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

38 But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.

39 Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown *by casting it* to the ground.

40 Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.

41 All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.

42 Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

43 Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.

† Heb. profane my statutes.
† Heb. I will not make void from him.
† Heb. lie.
† Heb. if I lie.
e 2 Sam. 7. 16. Luke 1. 33. John 12. 34.

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27. *my firstborn*] The expression is applied to Israel, Ex. iv. 22, and then in a special sense to David, as representing Messiah. Ps. ii. 7; cf. Heb. i. 5, 6.

higher than the kings, &c.] Or, **most high over the kings of the earth**. This very strong term is used in Deut. xxviii. 1, "The Lord thy God will set thee *on high* above all nations of the earth." It implies supremacy and dominion approaching the divine. Cf. Num. xxiv. 7.

30. *If his children forsake my law*] Rehoboam "*forsook the law* of the Lord, and all Israel with him," 2 Chro. xii. 1.

31. *break my statutes*] Or, **profane**, as in marg.

32. *with the rod*] 2 S. vii. 14, "with the rod of men," sc. with chastisements not too heavy for human infirmity. In Job xxi. 9, "the rod of God" denotes terrible judgments.

33. *my faithfulness to fail*] Lit. "to lie:" a very strong expression, but see Heb. vi. 18.

34. *break*] **profane**, as *v.* 31.

35. *by my holiness*] Ps. lx. 6.

37. *and as a faithful witness in heaven*] Rather, **and the Witness in heaven is faithful**. By "the Witness," Delitzsch holds that God Himself is meant, comparing Job xvi. 19. (Thus Sym. ὁ διαμαρτυρόμενος, LXX. ὁ μάρτυς.) The objection, that God Who makes the promise cannot represent Himself as the witness, is futile: what God decrees He attests. Some would explain it to mean the moon (Hupf., Perowne), on the singular ground that "in all countries she has been the arbiter of festivals." This, however, is the climax of the whole argument of the Psalmist; he rests wholly on the faithfulness of God (see note on *v.* 1), and his last word is "faithful."

38. *But thou hast cast off*] In contrast to all that is promised comes the description of the actual condition of the king: the object being, not to upbraid the Faithful and True, Whose praise will be ever in the Psalmist's mouth (see *v.* 1), but to shew that the chastisement is complete; it has done its work. See 2 Chro. xii. 12, quoted above.

39. *Thou hast made void*] The Hebrew word occurs elsewhere in Lam. ii. 7 only: Jeremiah, as is his wont, adopts the language of earlier seers.

his crown] See Job xix. 9; Lam. v. 16. In this passage, however, the word refers undoubtedly to the king: his crown was profaned when he was reduced to vassalage. 2 Chro. xii. 8.

40. *his hedges*] Shishak "took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah," l. c. *v.* 4. *Strongholds* fortified by Rehoboam are named in the inscriptions of Karnak.

41. *All that pass by*, &c.] See Ps. lxxx. 12. "The people were without number—Lubims, Sukkiims, and Ethiopians," 2 Chro. xii. 3.

43. *the edge of his sword*] The expressions in this verse imply that no resistance was made in the open field. Such was evidently the case in the Egyptian invasion. The phrase does not mean "blunted the edge of his

† Heb. *brightness.*

44 Thou hast made his †glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.

45 The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

46 How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?

47 Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

48 What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

49 Lord, where *are* thy former lovingkindnesses, *which* thou ſswarest unto David in thy truth?

ſ 2 Sam. 7. 15.

50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; *how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people;

51 Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.

52 Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

PSALM XC.

1 *Moses, setting forth God's providence,* 3 *complaineth of human fragility,* 7 *divine chastisements,* 10 *and brevity of life.* 12 *He prayeth for the knowledge and sensible experience of God's good providence.*

‖ A Prayer of Moses the man of God.

‖ Or, *A Prayer,* being a Psalm *of Moses.*
† Heb. *in generation and generation.*

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place †in all generations.

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sword," as in our usage, but "turned back his attack."

44. *his glory*] Lit. "Thou hast made him to cease from his purity." The expression is peculiar: it implies that the king had contracted defilement, been subjected to treatment which degraded him; an account true of Jechoniah, but not less so of Rehoboam.

cast his throne] See note on *v.* 39.

45. *The days of his youth*] Or, "Thou hast cut short the days of his youth:" *i. e.* of his youthful vigour, as in Job xxix. 4, xxxiii. 25. Rehoboam was forty-six years old, still in the prime of life, when the ruin fell upon him. He survived it twelve years. See 2 Chro. xii. 13.

covered him] Clothed him with shame, as a mantle. Thus Pss. lxxi. 13, cix. 29.

46. *How long, LORD?*] See Ps. lxxiv. 10.

hide thyself] Ps. xiii. 1.

burn like fire] Ps. lxxix. 5.

47. *how short my time is*] Ps. xvii. 14, xxxix. 5; the word rendered "time" is used properly of the brief, frail life of man: hence Dr Kay, "how fleeting." The Psalmist speaks in his own person, but probably as representing the race of man.

wherefore .... in vain] Thus the old interpreters, but modern critics generally give, "for what vanity hast Thou created all men?"

49. *lovingkindnesses*] The word rendered "mercies" in *v.* 1. The Psalmist recurs to his original plea.

in thy truth] Rather, "in Thy faithfulness," as in *v.* 1; the refrain of the Psalmist's expostulation.

50. *how I do bear,* &c.] "I do bear in my bosom all *the reproach* of many peoples." The expression is obscure. The general meaning of "bearing in the bosom," spoken of a chief or teacher, is fostering with tender care; thus of Moses, Num. xi. 12; but the following clause evidently points to the word "reproach" inserted in the A. V. The Psalmist bore the revilings of the enemies of Israel as a heavy load upon his heart.

51. *the footsteps of thine anointed*] This is generally understood to mean "all the movements of the king;" as Perowne suggests, "every step he takes;" so Ps. lvi. 6; but the word, which means "heels," may imply the traces, the retreating movements, the backward steps of the king; see note on *v.* 43. Thus Gen. xlix. 19, "agmen extremum." The Targum has "they revile the tardiness of the footsteps of Thy Christ."

The psalm is not directly Messianic; the whole tone of expostulation and prayer belongs to local and temporary circumstances; but the anticipations are grounded on promises which have their true fulfilment in Christ. It is a noble ode, and forms a fitting close to the book which contains the deep teaching of seers trained in the school of David. The concluding words, though added to mark the completion of this division, seem to have a special connection with the beginning of the psalm, and express the innermost and permanent conviction of the composer.

FOURTH BOOK. PSALMS XC.—CVI.

PSALM XC.

The deepest interest attaches to this solemn hymn, through its title, which ascribes it to Moses. There is nothing in the psalm inconsistent with such authorship: and its general contents, many particular phrases, its resem-

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.

3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

4 [a] For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday [1] when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night.

5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are *as* a sleep: in the morning *they are* like grass *which* [1] groweth up.

6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

7 For we are consumed by thine

[a] 2 Pet. 3. 8.
[1] Or, *when he hath passed them.*
[1] Or, *is changed.*

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blance throughout to the books of the Pentateuch, but especially to the book of Deuteronomy, its earnestness, trust, realization of God's nearness, and a melancholy which seems natural in a man of such astonishing experiences and mighty disappointments, fall in with the supposition which general opinion confirms. Many passages, as *vv.* 7, 8, assume a singular significance, as coming from him at the end of his wanderings in the desert; but are pointless in comparison, if written by any other. Moses is styled, as here, Deut. xxxiii. 1, Josh. xiv. 6, Ezra iii. 2, *the man of God.*

1. *dwelling place*] Or, "home;" see Deut. xxxiii. 27; Ps. lxxi. 3, and xci. 9. The word seems specially significant, if written by Moses, who had no fixed dwelling-place for forty years.

in all generations] Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 27.

2. *Before the mountains*, &c.] (1) "Before the mountains, which are the emblems of eternity and strength (Deut. xxxiii. 15; Gen. xlix. 26; Prov. viii. 25), were brought forth, and born (Job xxxviii. 8, 28); (2) before the earth, and the world in which we live and move, were born (see Gen. ii. 4); and (3) from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." The Hebrew word, which is rendered in the A. V. *Thou hadst formed*, is probably the third person fem., and the rendering should be as above, "before the earth and the world were born," &c. A slight change of punctuation in the Hebrew is required for this rendering. The reference is to Gen. i. 9.

3. *Thou turnest*, &c.] Either referring to Gen. iii. 19, in which case the meaning is, "Thou turnest man to destruction (*i.e.* to dust and corruption), and sayest, Return to dust, ye children of dust;" or, "Thou turnest man to dust, and sayest to another generation, Return to life, and occupy for a time." The second exposition (see Eccles. i. 4) sets in the most conspicuous light the contrast between the eternity of God and man's changing existence: but the first seems best, as the words of the place in Gen. seem to be quoted. See also Eccles. xii. 7.

4. *For a thousand*, &c.] Rather, "For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, **for it passes**, or, **as it passes**. and (as) a watch in the night;" *i.e.* "so dost Thou create, destroy, and re-create successive generations of men; for a thousand years pass away to Thee as one day: for it passes, or, as it passes (so to say), in an instant; as a watch in the night passes momentarily in sleep." The words in the original express rapidity. The rendering of the A. V., "as yesterday when it is past," is approved by good authorities (Zunz, &c.), yet seems, even supposing that the Hebrew will bear it, less spirited and poetical than the other.

a watch in the night] A space of time shorter than the day or night (see Exod. xiv. 24). The night, commencing at 6 o'clock, was divided in early times into three, afterwards into four, watches. Judg. vii. 19; Mark xiii. 35.

5. *Thou carriest*, &c.] Images introduced to mark man's frail nature. "The men (that were) Thou hast carried them away as with a flood: they are as a sleep: as grass which flourishes in the morning and is cut down in the evening, are they," &c. There is obscurity in some of the expressions of this verse; and many commentators conceive that an alteration in the text, or a different arrangement of some words in it, is needful. As it stands (and is exhibited in the A. V.), it presents a sense sufficiently plain. The comparison of man's life and weakness to *grass* is not fully drawn out.—Lit. "in the morning as the grass grows up: in the morning it grows up: in the evening it is cut down (strictly, man cuts it down), and withers: so"—we must supply—"the life of man." In the first two images (*v.* 5) no comparison is *expressed;* man is swept away with a flood: he is a sleep. A single word expresses the first of these similitudes. The phrase (*v.* 5) which in the P. B. V. is interpreted "fade away," is rendered in our version *groweth up*, but in the margin "is changed." It can scarcely (as in the P. B. V.) have two different meanings, *i.e.* "fade away" (*v.* 5), and "groweth up" (*v.* 6), in consecutive verses. In the original there is nothing answering to "dried up" of the P. B. V: it is inserted, we may suppose, partly

anger, and by thy wrath are we †troubled.

8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret *sins* in the light of thy countenance.

9 For all our days are †passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years ‖as a tale *that is told.*

10 †The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, *so is* thy wrath.

12 So teach *us* to number our

† Heb. *turned away.*
‖ Or, *as a meditation.*
† Heb. As for *the days of our years, in them* are *seventy years.*

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on account of the rhythm, and partly as an amplification.

7. *For we are consumed*, &c.] From the general subject of man's weakness, the Psalmist turns to speak particularly of the weakness and sin of himself and his people, and of the wrath of God, of which sin was the cause. The complaint is suitable to any period of Israel's history, in which suffering followed sin as its meed, but seems specially suited to the experience of Moses. He and his people, on account of their sin, were *consumed* in the wilderness, and *troubled* through His wrath; for all of them, except Caleb and Joshua, perished before their time, and lost the inheritance promised to their fathers. See Deut. i. 35—38.

God's *anger* and *wrath* (the same expressions, Heb., as in the psalm) are constantly coupled in Deut. ix. 19, xxix. 23, 28, &c.

8. *Thou hast set*, &c.] "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, so as to mark each one individually, and recollect it: our secret sins (lit. secrets), which we would gladly conceal from ourselves, Thou hast put in the splendour which surrounds Thy countenance, so that Thou Thyself, and all creation, may note each and every one of them." Wherever God in mercy turns His face, a bright benignant radiance shines, Num. vi. 25; Ps. xxxvi. 9. In the midst of this blaze of light, which encompasses Him, and uncovers all things everywhere, He has placed the sins of the Psalmist and of His people: words, which have a singular force if written by Moses, who saw the splendour of God, and carried away from His person (Exod. xxxiv. 29) its manifest tokens.

9. *For all our days*, &c.] "For all our days pass away (quickly) in Thine anger; we spend our years as a tale, or, as a meditation, that has come to an end, or, as a word that is spoken, and thought of no more." The complaint is of the shortness and misery of life through God's wrath; a complaint which has a singular propriety if uttered by Moses, who saw a generation of men perish before their time in a few years, and multitudes perish in a moment by special interposition of God. The word rendered "passed away" means (see the marg.) "have turned" as the day turns at evening. Jer. vi. 4, "Woe unto us! for the day **turneth** (in our version, *goeth away*), for the shadows of the evening are stretched out." A quick, unexpected, invisible passing is imaged. The comparison which follows of the years of life to a tale that is told, or a word, whisper, sigh, or thought, which is spoken, heard, or imagined, for a moment, and leaves no trace, is of similar import: Job xxxvii. 2, "the *sound* that goeth out of his mouth" (Heb. as in the ps.), favours the interpretation, a *sound* or *word*. Note, the poetical form of the word *years*, in the next verse, occurs Deut. xxxii. 7.

10. *The days of our years*, &c.] Lit. (as in the marg.) "As for the days of our years, in them (are) seventy years." But the spirit and manner of the original are better exhibited, if the distinct versicles are marked.

"All the days of our years—threescore years are they;
Or if strength be great, seventy and ten years;
And their pride is labour and sorrow;
For soon it has passed away—and we too must fly away!"

By **their pride**, *their strength* in our version, is meant that which is best in each, *i.e.* youth, beauty, strength or glory, as in each case may happen.

This lament over the shortness of life, and its limitation to seventy or eighty years, seems inconsistent with the supposition that Moses wrote the psalm. Moses lived 120 years, Aaron 123 years, Miriam longer. We can only guess what was the average duration of life in that generation with which Moses lived in the wilderness. It was certainly much lower than that of any one of those named; and probably lower than that specified in the psalm. But the Psalmist is not speaking of an exceptional average, as that of the people whose lives were miraculously shortened, but of the general lot of man, and of his average life as shortened by divine ordinance. The latter may not improbably have been communicated to Moses by God, before the sentence was fully carried out.

days, that we may †apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

† Heb. *cause to come.*

13 Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

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11 *Who knoweth*, &c.] Or, *Who knoweth the power of Thine anger*, **and** *according to Thy fear*, (who understands) *Thy wrath? i.e.* "Who understands, practically and for life's guidance, what Thine anger is? Who understands the terror of Thy wrath, in a way that a just fear of Thee, a fear suitable to Thy majesty and holiness, should impart?"

12. *So teach us*, &c.] Rather, "Teach us **so** to number our days; and **we shall obtain a heart of wisdom!**" "So," *i.e.* rightly, in accordance with a just fear of Thee, and appreciation of Thy displeasure; to be connected with the preceding verse, not with what follows, as in 1 S. xxiii. 17: or, in accordance with the accents, "To number our days, O teach us *thus* to understand! and we shall obtain," &c. "We shall obtain," an image taken from the "gathering in" and "bringing home" of a plentiful harvest (2 S. ix. 10; Hag. i. 6, &c.).

13. *Return, O LORD*, &c.] Rather, **Turn, O Lord!** *i.e.* from Thy fierce anger: **repent** (*of this evil*, Exod. xxxii. 12), or, **shew compassion** towards Thy servants. "*How long* will it be ere Thou dost turn?"

thy servants] See Deut. ix. 27, xxxii. 36, &c.

14. *early*] Or, **in the morning**, of a new day of mercy and hope.

15. *Make us glad*, &c.] "Make us to rejoice *according to the days*, for a time, that is, bearing some proportion to the days, wherein Thou hast afflicted us, to the long years in which we saw calamity."

The poetical form of the word (יְמוֹת) signifying "days," occurs only here and Deut. xxxii. 7. The poetical form of the word (שְׁנוֹת) signifying "years," occurs here again (see above, *v.* 10). Also comp. Deut. viii. 2, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, *to humble thee*." In the Heb. "to afflict thee," as in the psalm.

16. *Let thy work*, &c.] See Pss. xcii. 4, xliv. 2, lxxvii. 12, &c. "Let Thy power and majesty be seen, as oftentimes, and exerted for the deliverance of Thy people!" If Moses be the Psalmist, Jehovah's work, Deut. xxxii. 4, is the performance of His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the establishment of His people in Canaan. This latter work was to be accomplished through the instrumentality of men, therefore the Psalmist adds, "Prosper thou *the work of our hands* upon us:" a phrase common in Deut., see ch. ii. 7, iv. 28, xiv. 29, xvi. 15, &c.

17. *beauty*, &c.] "May the grace and favour and loveliness of God: may all that in Him is beautiful, endearing, and engaging, be shewn to us, who have experienced His severity and justice!"

The cloud which hung over the psalm in its opening portion is partially removed towards its close. That intense confidence in God which is characteristic of Moses the servant of God through his varied history, breaks forth, if he be indeed the Psalmist, at the last. The phrases employed, and change of rhythm in *vv.* 14, 15, 16, &c., mark the transition from dark despondency under the sense of God's wrath, to a hope of the mercy so often experienced. It has been remarked (Perowne, 'Pref.' p. xvii.) that this psalm is like the pillar of fire and cloud which led the march of Israel: it is dark and bright: it is dark as it looks in sorrowful retrospect upon man; it is bright as it is turned in hope and confidence to God. In its grand purport, as well as in many particulars which have been mentioned, in loftiness of tone, solemnity, acquaintance with God, close approximation to Him, and a magic power of swaying the thoughts, and moving them to their depths, it reminds us of the acknowledged compositions of Moses: and it is strange that eminent critics should imagine such a psalm, worthy (all allow) of Moses the man of God, to have been written late, and attributed to a mighty name. Grotius says "(Psalmus) non ab ipso Mose factus sed ejus rebus animoque conveniens." Hupfeld says, "The contents of the psalm, its profound earnestness, and solemn treatment of the theme of man's weakness and misery through sin, are worthy of Moses, and suitable to the close of his life in the desert." Ewald says, "There is something in the psalm that is wonderfully striking and solemn, ac-

PSALM XCI.

1 *The state of the godly.* 3 *Their safety.* 9 *Their habitation.* 11 *Their servants.* 14 *Their friend; with the effects of them all.*

HE that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall † abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

† Heb. *lodge.*

2 I will say of the LORD, *He is* my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

3 Surely he shall deliver thee from

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quainting us with the profoundest depths of the Divine Nature. These awful thoughts may well have occurred to Moses at the close of his wanderings: and the author, whoever he may be, is plainly a man grown grey with a vast experience, here taking his stand at the end of his earthly course."

PSALM XCI.

This psalm has been called the *Invocavit* psalm of the Church, and in the Talmud ('Tal. Hierosol. Sab.' VI. 2) "a song of accidents," *i.e.* a protective or talismanic song in times of danger. Like most of those contained in the fourth book, it bears no inscription in the Hebrew. In common with Pss. xcii. and xciii. it seems to have been designed for liturgical use. The ancient Rabbins and some modern commentators assign it to Moses, but on no stronger grounds, apparently, than its place in the Psalter in connection with Ps. xc., and its verbal coincidences with Deut. xxxii. and xxxiii. It has many thoughts and expressions resembling those which occur in the psalms of David, to whom it is ascribed in the LXX., but as regards its peculiar phraseology it has a closer resemblance to the book of Job. Professor Plumptre ('Biblical Studies,' p. 184) characterizes it as "an echo, verse by verse almost, of the words in which Eliphaz the Temanite describes the good man's life." Job v. 17—23. The supposition that it was composed with special reference to the pestilence recorded in 2 S. xxiv. and 1 Chro. xxi., appears to be groundless; for (1) it is doubtful whether there is any direct allusion to such a calamity in *v.* 3; and (2) it seems impossible to reconcile the language of *v.* 8 with that of David in 1 Chro. xxi. 17.

The fundamental idea of the psalm is the security, at all times, of the man who makes God his refuge, and who has the Most High as his defence. It is equally applicable to seasons of national visitation, whether of pestilence or other calamity, and to the occurrences of daily life. It may, indeed, be fitly described as an expansion of the idea expressed by S. Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The difficulties arising out of the repeated changes of person have been unduly magnified. Though more than ordinarily numerous and abrupt, they are by no means without parallel in other psalms (see *e.g.* Pss. xviii. 24—28, xx. throughout, xli. 4—9, cix. 5, 6, and cxxi. throughout). The simplest and most natural explanation of these changes, and one which involves no arbitrary alteration of the text, seems to be that the psalm was composed as a pilgrim song, and that it consists of the alternate responses of two voices, thus: 1st voice, *v.* 1: 2nd voice, *v.* 2. 1st voice, *vv.* 3—8: 2nd voice, *v.* 9*a*. 1st voice, *vv.* 9*b*—13. The oracle, or divine response, contained in *vv.* 14—16, forms the fitting conclusion. Its principal division into two parts is clearly marked by the refrain of *v.* 9, and also by the recurrence in *vv.* 9 and 10 of the theme or ground-thought of the psalm, as enunciated in *vv.* 1, 2.

Although the psalm has numerous references to earlier compositions, it is, as Delitzsch has observed, one of the most original and beautiful in the Psalter, and, in common with many of the psalms contained in this book, it resembles in style the second part of the prophecies of Isaiah.

1. *He that dwelleth*, &c.] Rather, **He that dwelleth in the covert of the Most High**—(that) **abideth under the shadow of the Almighty**. Both clauses of the verse may be regarded as describing, in accordance with one of the most common forms of Hebrew parallelism, the character of the man who is the object of the divine protection. The omission of the relative pronoun before "abideth" in *v.* 1 has three parallels in *vv.* 5 and 6, as may be seen in the A. V., where "that" occurs three times in italics. It is probable, from *v.* 4, that the allusion in *vv.* 1 and 2 is to the overshadowing wings of the cherubim in the most holy place, rather than to the shelter from heat and storm afforded to the traveller by the rock-hewn caves of Palestine; cf. Pss. xvii. 8, lvii. 1, lxiii. 7; in which passages the words translated "shadow" (*v.* 1), and "wings" (*v.* 4), are combined; or, there may be an allusion to both, as in Ps. lxi. 2—4. Cf. Pss. xxvii. 5, xxxi. 20, xxxii. 7, cxix. 114; Isai. xvi. 4, xxxii. 2.

abide] Lit., **passes the night**. Cf. Gen. xix. 2; Job xxxix. 9, 28.

2. *I will say of the LORD*] The key-note of the psalm being struck in *v.* 1, the response of the second voice, in *v.* 2, "I will say," &c. involves no serious difficulty, and necessitates no conjectural change of reading or punctuation. According to the accentuation the translation should be, "I say, To Jehovah belongs," &c., or, "In Jehovah is," &c., but (see *v.* 9, where the address is direct) the words may

the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; *nor* for the arrow *that* flieth by day;

6 *Nor* for the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness; *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noonday.

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because thou hast made the LORD, *which is* my refuge, *even* the most High, thy habitation;

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be rendered "I say to Jehovah, My refuge and my fortress," *i.e.* I habitually invoke Him as such. To those who thus trust in Him God reveals Himself not only as El Elyon and El Shaddai (*v.* 1), but as Jehovah, the covenant God of His believing people (Exod. vi. 3, where see note).

fortress] See Note at end.

3. *Surely he shall deliver thee*] Rather, **For He shall deliver thee**, or, "For He, even He, delivers thee." These words begin the response of the first voice, assigning the ground of the confidence just expressed. The pronoun is emphatic.

from the snare of the fowler] Cf. Ps. cxxiv. 7 (a psalm of degrees), where the same figure occurs with reference to the men who rose up against Israel: also Pss. xviii. 5, cxli. 9; Eccles. ix. 12; Hos. ix. 8. Spiritually, the promise of deliverance applies to "the snare of the devil." Cf. 2 Tim. ii. 26.

from the noisome pestilence] Rather, **from the pestilence of malignity**. The second noun is in the plural, which gives it an emphatic and comprehensive meaning. See note on Ps. v. 9. Cf. Ps. lvii. 1.

4. *He shall cover thee with his feathers*] Or, "There shall be a covering for thee under His pinion." The verb here used occurs with reference to the ark as concealed by the vail (Exod. xl. 3), and to the cherubim as covering the mercy-seat with their wings (1 K. viii. 7). (Cf. Ezek. xxviii. 14, 16; S. Matt. xxiii. 37.)

shalt thou trust] Rather, "thou art sheltered." Cf. Ps. lvii. 1.

his truth shall be thy shield and buckler] Or, "shield and buckler is His truth." The word rendered *shield* denotes the large shield which protected the whole body, the θυρεός, *scutum*, as distinguished from the ἀσπίς, *clypeus*. Cf. Ps. v. 12; Eph. vi. 16.

5. *terror by night*] The perils to which Eastern travellers are exposed by night, from robbers and beasts of prey, are very numerous. Cf. Job xxxvi. 20. Night attacks, like that of Gideon, were also common in Eastern warfare.

the arrow] The continuity of thought and of metaphor is still preserved. The arrow may be God's arrow (see Deut. xxxii. 23, 24), as *e.g.* the pestilence, or any noxious influence, such as the Simoom, or Sirocco, which is said to prevail most commonly in the day-time (see Ritter's 'Compar. Geog. of Palestine,' I. 249, and 'The Negeb,' pp. 37, 38, for a description of it); or it may be the arrow of the enemy, *i. e.* any hostile assault. The sixth verse may be regarded as explanatory, on the principle of parallelism, of the fifth, or as illustrative of its meaning.

7. *A thousand shall fall*, &c.] Lit. "There shall fall on thy side (*i.e.* thy left hand) a thousand, and ten thousand on thy right hand; to thee it shall not come nigh." The omitted particle may be supplied in the first clause of the verse thus: "*If* a thousand should fall," &c.; cf. Ps. xxxix. 11: or, more correctly, in the second, as in the A V.; "*but* it shall not," &c. Cf. Ps. cxix. 23, 51, 61; Hos. viii. 12. The singular number ("*it* shall not come nigh") is expressive of the security of the righteous man from each and every form of the dangers and evils enumerated. The promise has its spiritual fulfilment, whether the temporal danger be averted, or whether grace and strength sufficient for the day be vouchsafed. The same rod which destroys the wicked comforts the righteous, even in the passage through the dark valley of the shadow of death. The man who keeps Christ's saying never sees death, because for him the sting of death is extracted. Cf. Joh. viii. 51, 52; 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

8. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold*] It was thus with the Israelites when, having passed safely through the Red Sea, they "saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore," Exod. xiv. 30. Cf. also Exod. xii. 29, 30; 2 Chro. xx. 17.

reward] Or, "recompence." The same form of the word is not found elsewhere. Cf. Isai. xxxiv. 8, where a plural masculine form occurs.

9. *Because thou hast made*] **For Thou, O Jehovah, art my refuge: thou** (see intr.) **hast made the Most High thy habitation**. The first clause refers to *v.* 2, and seems to be the refrain of the second voice, in which case the second clause of the verse will be the response of the first voice.

10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

[a] Matth. 4. 6. Luke 4. 10.

11 [a] For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and [1] adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

[1] Or, *asp*.

14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I *will be* with him

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The word which is rendered "habitation" is the same which is used in Ps. xc. 1.

10. *There shall no evil*, &c.] The promise of exemption from calamity is here expressed yet more strongly. The word rendered "evil" denotes any calamity, whatever its origin, or its nature. The word rendered "plague" is one which is commonly used to denote the stroke of God's hand, as the leprosy, pestilence, &c.

thy dwelling] Lit. **thy tent.** The word comports well with the general complexion of the psalm as a pilgrim psalm.

11. *his angels*] The promise of angelic guardianship is here (as in Ps. xxxiv. 7) given to all who trust in the Lord. The words neither assert nor deny the appointment of specific guardian angels to individuals. Cf. Gen. xxiv. 7; Exod. xxiii. 20; Dan. iii. 28.

over thee] Or, "with respect to," or "on account of thee," *i.e.* for thy benefit. The angels are said to be "sent forth for ministry on behalf of those who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. i. 14.

in all thy ways] The office of the angel whom God promised to send before the Israelites is described in the words "to keep thee (the same word here used) in the way." (Exod. xxiii. 20.) When Satan applied this verse of the psalm to our Lord in the wilderness, he omitted the words "in all thy ways," as not suitable to his purpose. "Non est via hæc, sed ruina; et si via tua est, non illius. Frustra in tentationem Capitis intorsisti, quod scriptum est ad corporis consolationem." D. Bernard. 'Serm. XIV. in Ps. xc.' (Heb. xci.).

12. *in their hands*] **upon their hands.** LXX. ἐπὶ χειρῶν. The same figure which pervades the psalm appears here under another form. As the eagle is represented in Deut. xxxii. 11, bearing its young "on her wings," so the angels, the flying ones (cf. Isai. vi. 6; Dan. ix. 21; Rev. viii. 13, xiv. 6), are here described as lifting up the righteous "upon their hands," or pinions.

lest thou dash thy foot, &c.] There is probably a reference here to Prov. iii. 23, as in *vv.* 5, 6 to Prov. iii. 25, 26. The stone is in entire harmony with the view taken of this psalm as a journeying psalm.

13. *Thou shalt tread*, &c.] Although the verbs rendered "tread" and "trample under foot" have primary reference to the second of the two nouns in each clause of the verse, nevertheless, in the narrow mountain-passes of the East, obstacles can often be overcome in no other manner than by walking over them. Figuratively, the assaults of open violence are fitly represented by the fury of the lion, whilst those of secret malice are as fitly represented by the venomous bite of the serpent. Cf. S. Mark xvi. 18, "they shall take up serpents;" S. Luke x. 19, "Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy;" Rom. xvi. 20, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly;" also Judg. xiv. 6; 1 S. xvii. 34, 35; Dan. vi. 23; Acts xxviii. 3, 6; and more especially S. Matt. iv. 1—11. "Sed manifeste etiam leonem te conculcabit *Leo de tribu Iuda.*" D. Bernard., ut supra.

14. *set his love upon me*] The word which is rendered "set his love," and which is more literally rendered "to take pleasure in one," is used in Deut. vii. 7, and x. 15, to denote God's delight in His people. Here, the delight of God's people in Him is represented as drawing forth the fulfilment of His promises to them.

deliver him] *i.e.* "set him free," or "enable him to escape." Cf. Ps. xviii. 48, cxliv. 2.

I will set him on high] The promise becomes brighter and fuller, but the same figure is preserved which is used in *v.* 12.

he hath known my name] *i. e.* My covenant name, Jehovah. See note on *v.* 2.

15. *I will be with him in trouble*] God is described in Ps. xlvi. 1, as the "very present help" of His people in "troubles," the plural of the same word used in this verse.

I will deliver him] Or, "rescue him," a different verb from that employed in *v.* 14. Cf. Ps. l. 15, of which the promise contained in this verse is an echo.

and honour him] Because he honours God by reposing all his confidence in him. Cf. 1 S. ii. 30.

16. *With long life*] **length of days.** See note on Ps. xxi. 4. A long life in the land of promise was the reward of obedience to the requirements of the Mosaic law. Cf. Ex.

in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

16 With †long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

† Heb. *length of days.*

xx. 12 (where see note); Deut. v. 16. But the words here, as in Ps. xxiii. 6, and elsewhere, require a larger and a spiritual interpretation, as looking forward to that eternal life of which a long life in the land of Canaan was the type and the pledge.

and shew him my salvation] *i.e.* cause him to behold it with complete satisfaction; an echo of Ps. l. 23. Cf. also Pss. liv. 7, lix. 10, cvi. 5, cxii. 8, cxviii. 7, cxxviii. 5; and see note on Psalm xxii. 17. "To live to see the final glory," says Delitzsch in loc., "was the rapturous thought of the Old Testament hope, and, in the apostolic age, of the New Testament hope also." Cf. Gen. xlix. 18; Ps. cxviii. 14, 21; Isai. xii. 2; Heb. ix. 28.

NOTE on PSALM XCI. 2.

The word מצודה is rightly rendered "fortress" or "defence" in this place. But it also means a net (Ps. lxvi. 11; Ezek. xii. 13); and if, as is possible, the Psalmist had this signification also in his mind, we are able to trace a continuity of thought in the following verse: "He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler;" and also in *v.* 4, where the figure of the bird is again introduced.

PSALM XCII.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to praise God,* 4 *for his great works,* 6 *for his judgments on the wicked,* 10 *and for his goodness to the godly.*

A Psalm *or* Song for the sabbath day.

IT *is a* good *thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:

2 To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness †every night,

3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; ‖upon the harp with †a solemn sound.

4 For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

5 O LORD, how great are thy

† Heb. *in the nights.*
‖ Or, *upon the solemn sound with the harp.*
† Heb. *Higgaion.*

PSALM XCII.

The title of this psalm seems to imply that it was used in the temple-services on the Sabbath day. It was sung, we are told, in the morning at the time of the drink-offering of the first lamb, and also on the second day of the Feast of Tabernacles (see 'Middoth,' II. 5). It is a disputed question, however, in the Talmud whether the psalm refers to the Sabbath of Creation, or to the final Sabbath of the world's history; and it is described in one place as "A Psalm or Song for the future age, all of which will be Sabbath." S. Athanasius describes its subject as the rest which remains for the faithful; αἰνεῖ ἐκείνην τὴν γενησομένην ἀνάπαυσιν. The Sabbath number is preserved in this psalm in the sevenfold recurrence of the word Jehovah. The theme is the faithfulness and truth of God as displayed in His righteous administration of the universe, and as vindicated by the ultimate destiny both of the righteous and of the wicked. The chief points of difference between this and other psalms in which the same subject is treated are (1), that whereas they, for the most part (cf. Pss. i., xxxvii., lxxiii.), teach the equity of God's providential government dogmatically, this proclaims it in a song of thanksgiving; and (2), whereas elsewhere, especially in Psalm lxxiii., the inequality in the present administration of God's providence is a source of perplexity, this psalm seems to have its standing-point in a dispensation in which we shall no longer "see through a glass darkly," and in which the promise, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," shall have received its fulfilment. In this psalm, as in the preceding, God is spoken of as Elyon, "Most High." Both psalms employ the sacred name Jehovah, and the sentiment expressed in xcii. 11 corresponds with that of xci. 8.

1. *to sing praises*] The word means either to "sing" or "play upon an instrument." It is used also to denote the accompaniment of the song with instrumental music. The noun *mizmor*, *i.e.* "psalm," is derived from it.

3. *Upon an instrument of ten strings,* &c.] It is probable that two instruments only are named in this verse, and that it should be rendered thus: "To the ten-stringed instrument, even to the lute, to a gentle strain upon the harp." LXX. ἐν δεκαχόρδῳ ψαλτηρίῳ μετ' ᾠδῆς ἐν κιθάρᾳ. See critical Note at end.

4. *through thy work*] Or, "through Thy works," as it is in many MSS. The words translated in the A. V. "work" and "works" are different in the Heb. The former is frequently used of God's works or dispensations

works! *and* thy thoughts are very deep.

6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

7 When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; *it is* that they shall be destroyed for ever:

8 But thou, LORD, *art most* high for evermore.

9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like *the horn of* an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

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in providence (cf. Pss. xliv. 1, xc. 16). The latter is a more common word, and includes the works of creation. (Cf. Ps. viii. 6; also cxliii. 5, where both words are found, and apparently in the senses respectively assigned to them here.) The unfolding of the psalm begins with this verse.

6. *A brutish man*] *i.e.* man in his rude, uncultivated state, as by nature (cf. Ps. lxxiii. 22).

a fool] Literally, "one fat or fleshy." This word, which is of frequent occurrence in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, is found only in two other places in the Psalms, viz. xlix. 10, which probably belongs to the same period as this series of psalms (see introd. to that psalm), and xciv. 8. In both cases it is found in conjunction with the word rendered "brutish." Both words are opposed to the truly wise, *i.e.* righteous man, who rightly considers God's works. The Psalms frequently refer to the elevating influences of spiritual intuition as constituting the true distinction between the natural man (ψυχικός) and the spiritual man (πνευματικός).

7. *When the wicked spring as the grass*] The same verb is applied to the righteous in *v.* 12, and translated "flourish." In eastern countries the grass, beneath the influence of heavy rains and a hot sun, soon attains maturity, and is as quickly scorched and withered. (Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36, where the coincidence of thought is striking, but the phraseology is different.) There seems to be a reference to this verse in 1 Macc. ix. 23, where the correspondence with the LXX. version of it is very close.

it is that they shall be destroyed] Lit. "for, or with reference to, their being destroyed;" *i.e.* that they are fast ripening for destruction. Cf. Ps. lxii. 9. (Cf. also Job xxvii. 14, where, however, the construction is different.)

for ever] A peculiar expression. It is found only in two other psalms, viz. lxxxiii. 17, and cxxxii. 12, 14, and twice in Isaiah. See Note at end.

8. *art most high*] Or, "art (throned) on high." Cf. Ps. xciii. 4. This verse, standing in the middle of the psalm, contains the central truth which is enforced throughout it. The assurance that "the Lord sitteth above the water-floods" is the prop of the righteous man's faith, however the people may rage, and however vehemently the water-floods may beat.

9. *For, lo, thine enemies*] The word rendered "lo" seems to point with a finger of scorn to the workers of iniquity and to their end. Cf. "those mine enemies," S. Luke xix. 27. The iteration tends greatly to strengthen the force of the passage.

shall be scattered] The word may mean simply dispersed (cf. Job iv. 11), or it may mean (so the Chaldee) separated, *i.e.* separated from the congregation of the righteous, as the chaff is separated by winnowing from the wheat (S. Matt. xiii. 30), and as the sheep are divided from the goats (S. Matt. xxv. 32). Cf. Job xli. 17. Although the world-powers now seem great and compact, they are destined to be smitten by the stone "cut out without hands;" and then "the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold" must be "broken to pieces together, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors" (Dan. ii. 35).

10. *But my horn*, &c.] Rather, "But my horn hast thou exalted as that of an oryx (or antelope)." See notes on Num. xxiii. 22; Job xxxix. 9; Ps. xxii. 21. The height of the horn was the measure of the real or imaginary greatness of the wearer. As God is "enthroned on high" (cf. *v.* 8, where the root is the same as in the word "exalted"), and is the Most High (*v.* 1), so He lifts up and sets on high His people.

I shall be anointed] Rather, "I am anointed with fresh oil," cf. Ps. xxiii. 5. The expression "I am anointed with *fresh* oil" denotes ease, refreshment, and health. The importance of extracting the oil before the berry becomes black, and consequently of gathering the fruit at the proper time, is well known. It is thought best to carry the fruit to the press as soon as it is gathered and cleaned. See Smith's 'Dict.' art. *Olive*. "Si in terrâ vel tabulato oleum nimium diu erit, putrescet... ex quovis oleo oleum *viridius* vel bonum fieri potest, *si tempori facias*." M. Cato, 'De rebus rusticis.' The word rendered "fresh," which is commonly used of the tree and translated "green," is, in this place only, used of its oil. See Note at end of Psalm.

11 Mine eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies, *and* mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.

12 [a] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and [†] flourishing;

15 To shew that the LORD *is* upright: *he is* my rock, and *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

[a] . 24.

† Heb. *green.*

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11. *shall see my desire .... shall hear my desire*] Or, "has seen my desire." Although the words "my desire" are rightly printed in italics, their verbal equivalents being wanting, the Hebrew idiom in both clauses implies the meaning expressed in the A.V. (see *v.* 7 and note). This is the only case of the occurrence of this idiom after a verb of hearing.

mine enemies] Rather, "those who lie in wait for me." This form of the word does not occur elsewhere.

of the wicked that rise up against me] Rather, "of those who rise up against me (as) evil-doers (or acting maliciously)."

12. *like the palm tree*] The palm-tree of the Oasis is remarkable for its erect growth, notwithstanding the weight of its produce ("nititur in pondus palma"), its perpetual verdure, its power of putting forth young shoots even in old age, the quantity of the fruit which it bears, and the distance of its foliage from the earth. Growing, as it does, in places where no other tree is found, it is an image of life in the midst of surrounding death. (See Delitzsch in loc., and note on Ps. i. 3.)

he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon] As the date-palm of the desert is remarkable for its vital energy, so is the cedar of Lebanon for its stately and gigantic growth. The cedar is a lofty, long-lived, wide-spreading, and deeply-rooted tree. Its wood is fragrant and almost imperishable. Twelve of the cedars of mount Lebanon still remain, and young trees in the East are as rare as ruins in the West. (See Tristram's 'Land of Israel,' p. 17.) Some of the properties belonging both to the palm-tree and the cedar seem to be alluded to in Isai. lxv. 22 and Song Sol. ii. 3.

13. *Those that be planted*] Rather, "Planted, or being planted, in the house of Jehovah, they shall blossom," &c. (cf. Job xiv. 9). Dean Stanley and others are of opinion that certain trees were planted in the courts of the temple. The prohibition of Deut. xvi. 21 (see note in loc.) seems to refer solely to idolatrous images. It appears also not improbable, considering the heat of the climate, that the court of the tabernacle, and afterwards the courts of the temple, were partially shaded by the foliage of trees. Nor are there wanting passages which seem to support this idea, as Josh. xxiv. 26, which speaks of the oak, or terebinth, by (or in) "the *sanctuary* of the Lord" (מקדש = ἱερόν), and Ps. lii. 8, where the Psalmist compares himself to "a green olive-tree in the house of the Lord." The righteous are like trees planted in a good soil. (Cf. "trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah," Isai. lxi. 3.) The LXX. render *shethulim* by πεφυτευμένοι; the other Greek versions render it by μεταφυτευθέντες, *transplanted*. So Jerome, *transplantati*. The wicked man, on the contrary, is compared to a tree growing in its own soil. He is indigenous. See notes on Pss. i. 3 and xxxvii. 35.

in the courts of our God] The word "courts," in the plural, appears to be used only of the temple, not of the tabernacle with its one court.

14. *bring forth fruit*] Or, "shall be vigorous," or "in full vital energy."

in old age] This seems to look back to Ps. xci. 16, "With long life will I satisfy him." The allusion to the cedar and the date-palm is still sustained; both being remarkable for longevity.

fat and flourishing] *i.e.* "full of sap and rich in verdure" (the same word as in *v.* 10, which is there translated "fresh"), in allusion probably to the vital energy and productiveness of the date-palm, and to the perpetual verdure both of that tree, and also of the cedar. The corresponding Aramaic word is used of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 4, and rendered "flourishing."

15. *To shew*, &c.] This verse looks back to *v.* 2. The verb rendered in *v.* 2 "to shew forth," and here "to shew," is the same. The "no unrighteousness" of *v.* 15 is the exact equivalent of the "faithfulness" of *v.* 2: the two words being the direct opposites of each other. Cf. "a God of truth, and without iniquity," Deut. xxxii. 4, where the word rendered "truth" is the same as that which is rendered "faithfulness" in *v.* 2, and the word rendered "iniquity" differs only in form from that which is rendered "unrighteousness" in this verse.

NOTES on Psalm xcii. 3, 7, and 10.

3. Some think that four musical instruments are denoted in this verse. In this case it may be rendered thus; "To (or upon) the ten-stringed instrument, and to the lute; to the higgaion, with (*i.e.* with the accompaniment of) the harp." But (1) in the two other places in which the word עשור occurs, viz. Ps. xxxiii. 2 (where see note), and Ps. cxliv. 9, it is preceded by the word נבל and one instrument, viz. the ten-stringed lute, is denoted; (2) the word הגיון does not denote any musical instrument in Ps. xix. 14, or Lam. iii. 62, or in the only other place, besides the present, in which it occurs, viz. Ps. ix. 16, where see note. Moreover, had two musical instruments been mentioned in the second clause of the verse the parallelism would have led us to expect ועלי כנור instead of בכנור. This, however, appears to be the only place in which the prep. על or עלי is used instead of ב in connection with musical instruments.

7. The former of the two words עֲדֵי־עַד is generally regarded as a prep., as in Ps. civ. 23, after the form עֲלֵי. It is not improbable, however, that it is here the const. form of the noun, and that the rendering should be "for ever and ever," or lit. "(for) duration of duration;" the prep. עד being omitted for the sake of euphony, as in the titles of Pss. lvii. and lviii. על is omitted before אל. Cf. עד עולמי עד Isai. xlv. 17.

10. Two other words corresponding in form with בלתי, "I am anointed," are used intransitively, viz. חמותי, Isai. xliv. 16, and דלותי, Ps. cxvi. 6. Saul and Jehu were anointed with the *flask*, פך, φάκος (1 S. x. 1; 2 K. ix. 1); David with the *horn*, קרן, the word used in this place (1 S. xvi. 13).

PSALM XCIII.

The majesty, power, and holiness of Christ's kingdom.

THE Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, *wherewith* he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

2 Thy throne *is* established [1]of old: thou *art* from everlasting.

[1] Heb. *from then.*

Psalm XCIII.

This psalm has no superscription in the Hebrew. In the LXX. the title is "For the day preceding the Sabbath, when the world had been peopled or established (ὅτε κατῴκισται, al. κατῴκιστο, ἡ γῆ). A song of praise by David." The former part of the title agrees with the Talmudic tradition, which regards this as the Friday's psalm, because God on the 6th day had finished His work, and had begun to reign over His creatures. (See 'Rosh hash-shanah,' 31 *a*, quoted by Delitzsch.) Hitzig and others have observed the connection of this psalm with *v.* 8 of Ps. xcii. Whatever historical allusions may be contained in *v.* 3 to the past or present assaults of the world-powers upon Israel, this psalm, the first of a remarkable series of theocratic psalms, anticipates the period of Jehovah's personal manifestation of Himself as the King of the whole earth. Cf. Apoc. xi. 15, 17, and xix. 6.

1. *The Lord reigneth*] Rather, "Jehovah is King," *i.e.* He now reigns; His kingdom is visibly established, His foes being made His footstool. LXX. Ὁ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ἐβασίλευσεν: Prayer-Book Version, "The Lord is King." The verb in the same tense is commonly used to denote the beginning of a new reign. Cf. 1 K. i. 18, "Adonijah reigneth." Cf. also 1 K. xxii. 41; 2 K. iii. 1, xv. 13; 2 Chro. xxix. 1; in all of which places it is rendered in the A.V. "began to reign." The Theocracy, as has been observed by Delitzsch in his introduction to this psalm, had its first manifestation when Jehovah became the King of Israel (Exod. xv. 18), and it will receive its completion when the King of Israel becomes the King of a whole world subdued, both outwardly and inwardly, to Himself. The verb which is here rendered "is (or has become) King," or, as Delitzsch renders it, "is now King," is here used in reference to the inauguration of the Theocracy in its final and complete manifestation. This is the watchword of the theocratic psalms (cf. Pss. xcvi. 10, xcvii. 1, xcix. 1).

the Lord is clothed with strength, &c.] Rather, "Jehovah is clothed, He is girded with strength;" the noun being understood in the former case, and expressed only in the latter. Cf. Isai. lix. 17, "He put on righteousness as a breastplate;" also Isai. li. 9, "Put on strength, O arm of Jehovah;" also Isai. lxiii. 1. The verb translated, "He hath girded Himself," is a military term; cf. Isai. viii. 9.

the world also is stablished] Or, "therefore, the world is firmly established;" cf. Ps. xcvi. 10. The word rendered "world" (תבל *tebel*, derived probably from the unused verb תבל, or יבל, in the sense of "to grow," "to be fruitful") corresponds to ἡ οἰκουμένη, S. Luke ii. 1; Heb. i. 6, and has special reference to

3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

4 The LORD on high *is* mightier than the noise of many waters, *yea, than* the mighty waves of the sea.

5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, † for ever.

† Heb. *to length of days.*

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the world as inhabited. The prophecy points to a time when the shaking of the earth and the troubling of its inhabitants foretold in Pss. lxxv. 3, xcvii. 4, xcix. 1 (cf. Isai. xxiv. 19, liv. 10), shall have subsided, when the things which can be shaken (Heb. xii. 27) shall have been removed, and the things which "cannot be shaken" shall be finally established. Having become the seat of Jehovah's kingdom, the world can no longer be shaken by the combined opposition of earth and hell. It is worth notice, as an illustration of the danger of bringing scripture to bear on scientific questions, that so able an expositor as Calvin appealed to this passage as a proof that the earth is motionless. (See Calvin in loc.)

2. *Thy throne is established of old*] The transition is abrupt, and brings into fuller view the predictive import of this series of psalms as referring to some future and signal manifestation of the sovereignty of Jehovah. (Cf. Pss. xxii. 28, xlv. 6; Zech. xiv. 9.) The clause may be interpreted, however, as denoting the certainty of Messiah's reign over a subjugated earth (cf. 2 S. vii. 16, where the words are almost identical, and Ps. lxxxix. 29, 36, 37), as determined by God's eternal and unchanging counsels.

3. *The floods have lifted up*] The word rendered "floods" commonly denotes the "rivers," but it is sometimes used of the sea in parallelism (cf. Ps. xxiv. 2; Jonah ii. 3), which, with its foaming and dashing waves, is also a fitting emblem of the powers of the world as arrayed in opposition to the kingdom of God. The three great world-powers by which the Israelites were successively oppressed are typically denoted by the three great rivers, the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates. Thus *e.g.* in Isai. viii. 7, "Now therefore behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and mighty (the same word as in *v.* 4), even the king of Assyria," &c. Both the Nile and the Euphrates are designated by the word *Nahar*, without the article (Isai. xix. 5, vii. 20). In the dual the word is used to denote the Euphrates and the Tigris (Gen. xxiv. 10, &c.). Cf. also Jer. xlvi. 7, 8.

the floods lift up their waves] Or, "roaring." The noun here employed, which occurs in no other place, seems to denote primarily "collision," "dashing," and hence the din or noise produced by the breakers. The change of tense is significant, as denoting the continuance of the threatened dangers. Such a transition is natural if the psalm was composed in the time of Hezekiah. (See Excursus on Pss. xci.—c.)

4. *The LORD on high*, &c.] The construction of this verse is involved in considerable difficulty, but the general meaning is clear. It may be rendered thus: "More glorious than the voices of waters many (and) glorious, (than) the breakers of the sea, is Jehovah (throned) on high." Cf. Ps. lxxvi. 4; Isai. xxxiii. 21; also Ex. xv. 10, where the adjective rendered "mighty" in the A.V. is used of the waters in which the Egyptians sank. See Note at end.

5. *Thy testimonies are very sure*, &c.] Cf. Ps. lxxxix. 28, 37. The abruptness of the transition causes a difficulty in tracing the connection of thought. The meaning probably is that the glory of Jehovah which is now manifested in the vindication of His attributes of truth and holiness will be more fully revealed hereafter when He shall take to Himself His great power, and reign over a world reduced outwardly and inwardly into submission to His sceptre. S. John, in like manner, having foretold in Apoc. xxi. 1 the establishment of the new heaven and the new earth, records in *v.* 5 the divine command given to him to "write: for these words are true and faithful." Cf. also Apoc. xxii. 3, 4, 6. It should be noticed, however, that there is a similar transition in Ps. xix. 7 from God's works to His word, and a striking verbal coincidence between that verse and *v.* 5 of this psalm.

for ever] Lit. "for length of days," as in Ps. xxiii. 6.

NOTE on PSALM XCIII. 4.

The rhythm of the verse, especially when compared with the similar structure of the preceding and following verses, and the accentuation point to a different rendering from that given in the foot-note, viz.: "More glorious than the voices of many waters, than the glorious breakers of the sea, is Jehovah (throned) on high." The objection, however, to this rendering is the position of the adj. אדירים.

PSALM XCIV.

1 *The prophet, calling for justice, complaineth of tyranny and impiety.* 8 *He teacheth God's providence.* 12 *He sheweth the blessedness of affliction.* 16 *God is the defender of the afflicted.*

O LORD † God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, † shew thyself.

† Heb. *God of revenges.*
† Heb. *shine forth.*

2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

4 *How long* shall they utter *and* speak hard things? *and* all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

5 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

7 [a] Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard *it*.

[a] Ps. 10. 11, 13.

8 Understand, ye brutish among the people: and *ye* fools, when will ye be wise?

9 [b] He that planted the ear, shall

[b] Exod. 4. 11. Prov. 20. 12.

PSALM XCIV.

This psalm also is without title in the Heb. The inscription in the LXX. is "A lyric psalm of David, for the 4th day of the week." It is said to have been the Wednesday song in the temple liturgy. It was also used by the Jews on the 4th and 5th days of the Feast of Tabernacles. The connection with the preceding psalm is probably as follows. The prediction of Messiah's reign suggests (cf. Rev. vi. 10) the earnest prayer for the hastening of His coming, for the purpose of "rendering vengeance to His enemies," and "avenging the blood of His servants" (Deut. xxxii. 35, 41, 43). The verbal points of coincidence with Pss. xcii. and xciii. are numerous and striking. The supposition that it has reference to the oppression of foreign foes, which has led Delitzsch to regard it as a very late psalm, seems to be without foundation (see notes on *vv.* 4, 6, 7, 8, 20). The exactions and acts of injustice and oppression of which the Psalmist speaks, appear to be those of the nobles or chief men amongst the people, not of foreign invaders; and the whole character of the psalm corresponds with the state of things described in the early chapters of the prophecies of Isaiah. Cf. i. 23, x. 2.

1. *O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth*] Lit. "O God of vengeances, Jehovah." The intensive plural denotes the completeness of the recompence, as Jer. li. 56 (cf. Deut. xxxii. 35; Isai. xxxv. 4).

shew thyself] Some render, "hath shone forth," as Deut. xxxii. 2, and Ps. l. 2. But the next verse is a prayer, and therefore *v.* 1 may be so regarded, the final letter of the verb (viz. ה) being omitted before the same letter which begins the next word. So Hitzig and Olshausen, J.

2. *Lift up thyself*] Cf. Isai. xxxiii. 10.

render a reward, &c.] Cf. Jer. li. 56; Isai. xxxv. 4. There is probably an allusion, by way of contrast, to Ps. xciii. 1, where the word rendered "majesty" is cognate with that here rendered "proud."

3. *LORD, how long*, &c.] We may compare with this inquiry the cry of the souls under the altar, "How long, O Lord holy and true," &c., Apoc. vi. 10.

4. *How long shall they utter*, &c.] Rather, "They pour forth (*i.e.* cause to gush out like a stream), they speak wantonness (or defiance)."

all the workers of iniquity boast themselves] The verb (יתאמרו) may mean, "they exalt themselves like princes," *ut Emiri se gerunt* (Schultens); (cf. Isai. lxi. 6;) or, more probably, it means simply, "they carry themselves high," *i.e.* act proudly. Cf. Isai. xvii. 9, where the cognate noun denotes the top, or highest branch, of a tree. The twice-repeated "workers of iniquity" (here and in *v.* 16) looks back to the same twice-repeated phrase in Ps. xcii. 7, 9.

5. *They break in pieces*] *i.e.* "crush" or "oppress," probably in reference to xciii. 3, where the adverse powers are represented as lifting up their roaring, a form of the same root. The verb is used Isai. iii. 15, and Prov. xxii. 22, where it manifestly refers to the acts of domestic oppressors, not of foreign invaders.

6. *They slay the widow and the stranger*, &c.] Neither the acts nor the words recorded in this and the following verse are those of foreign oppressors. They would have had no special motive for the murder of the stranger and the fatherless; and "Jah," and "the God of Jacob," are not the words which would have been familiar to them.

8. *Understand, ye brutish among the people*, &c.] Or, "ye most foolish of the people" (the prep. ב being one of the modes of expressing the superlative degree in Heb. Cf. Song of Sol. i. 8; Lam. i. 1). The words rendered "brutish" and "fools" are the same which occur xcii. 6 (where see note). The words "among the people" (cf. Ps. lxviii. 35) afford additional proof that the reference is not to foreign oppressors, but to Israel.

he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know?*

Cor. 3. 11 [c]The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

12 Blessed *is* the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

14 For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart † shall follow it.

† Heb. shall be *after it.*

16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? *or* who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

17 Unless the LORD *had been* my

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9. *shall he not hear?*] In allusion, as it seems, to the perverse words to which reference is made in *v.* 4.

shall he not see?] *i.e.* the deeds of violence and wrong recorded in *vv.* 5, 6. Everything which is good and excellent in the creature must be possessed in absolute perfection by the Creator.

10. *He that chastiseth*] Or, that "chasteneth (as in *v.* 12) the nations;" *i.e.* shall not He who does not suffer even the heathen to go unpunished visit the oppression of His own people by their brethren? Cf. Gen. xviii. 25; Job xii. 23, for similar allusions to God's providential and judicial administration of the heathen world.

he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?] Rather, "(even) He that teacheth man knowledge." The words in italics in the A.V. are needless. The argument is derived from God's moral government, as before from man's physical constitution.

11. *the thoughts of man*, &c.] See Note at end.

12. This verse affords no valid argument in favour of a late date, inasmuch as the purifying results of affliction, though more clearly brought to light in the later portions of the Old Testament, are distinctly recognized in the Pentateuch (cf. Deut. viii. 5); in many of the psalms of David; in the book of Proverbs (as *e.g.* Prov. iii. 12); and in a yet more striking manner in the book of Job. Cf. v. 17, &c.

and teachest him out of thy law] This psalm must have been written at a time when the law of God was in the hands of the writer. The law was known to Hezekiah, who "kept the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses" (2 K. xviii. 6). Cf. Isai. xxxiv. 16; 2 Tim. iii. 16.

13. *That thou mayest give him rest*, &c.] Lit. "To give (or afford) him rest from the days of evil;" *i.e.* "so that he shall not be disturbed by the days of evil." So Dr Kay. LXX. Τοῦ πραῢναι αὐτῷ ἀφ' ἡμερῶν πονηρῶν.

until the pit be digged for the wicked] Cf. Pss. ix. 15, xxxv. 7, 8; Prov. xxviii. 10. The word rendered "until" denotes the inevitableness of the doom reserved for the wicked, though "sentence against his evil work" is not always "executed speedily." Eccles. viii. 11. It may, however, have the meaning of *whilst*, as in Job i. 18. So Hitzig and Zunz.

14. *For the LORD*, &c.] The certainty of the final issue is confirmed by the "for" of this verse. This is the answer to the inquiry contained in *v.* 3. This verse should be compared with Jer. xii. 7, "I have *forsaken* mine house; I have *left* mine heritage" (where the same verbs occur in the Heb. as here, only in inverted order, and the noun rendered *heritage* is the same as that here rendered *inheritance*), and also with 1 S. xii. 22. S. Paul (Rom. xi. 2) argues the point nationally as regards the Jews, and affirms that "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew." The words "His people" and "His inheritance" point back to *v.* 5. Both words occur in Deut. xxxii. 9.

15. *But judgment shall return unto righteousness*, &c.] Or, "For judgment must return to (*i.e.* finally issue in and be found in conformity with) right." The meaning seems to be that righteousness must eventually triumph over present injustice, and then all honest-hearted men shall rejoice in the attainment of that which has been long yearned after. The ways of God must be finally vindicated, and all the upright in heart shall see and acknowledge that there is "a reward for the righteous," and "a God who judges (righteously) in the earth" (Ps. lviii. 11). Cf. Isai. xlii. 3, "He shall bring forth judgment unto truth."

16. *Who will rise up for me*, &c.] The Psalmist sees no refuge in man, and turns only to God. Cf. Ps. xcii. 11. The verse may be understood also prophetically of the time of the final vindication of the divine administration spoken of in the preceding verse. For the construction cf. Exod. xiv. 25; Judg. vi. 31; Ps. lv. 19; and 2 Chro. xx. 6; and for the fuller construction, 2 K. xiii. 12.

help, my soul had [1] almost dwelt in silence.

[1] Or, quickly.

18 When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?

21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.

22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God *is* the rock of my refuge.

23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

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17. *had almost dwelt in silence*] Or, "had almost inhabited silence" (cf. Ps. xxxvii. 3, for the construction), *i.e.* the silence of the grave (cf. Ps. cxv. 17).

18. *When I said*] Or, "Though I have said," *i.e.* if in time of danger and apparent desertion I have said, "My foot tottereth" (as S. Peter afterwards said, "I perish"), the compassion of Jehovah has sustained me.

19. *my thoughts*] "My cares" or "anxieties" or "distractions;" cf. Ps. cxxxix. 23 (the only other place in which this word occurs).

20. *Shall the throne of iniquity*, &c.] *i.e.* the judgment-seat of unrighteousness or wickedness. There can be no fellowship between Jehovah's throne of righteousness (xciii. 2) and the holiness which becomes His house (xciii. 5, cf. also 2 Cor. vi. 14), and the judgment-seat of unrighteousness, or malignity, and the oppression described in this psalm as executed "by a law," or by a decree, *i.e.* under the semblance of the administration of justice. This and the following verse afford further indication that it is internal and not external oppression to which the Psalmist refers.

21. *They gather themselves together against*] The verb thus rendered may mean, "they decide upon the life of the righteous" (so Fuerst), or, "they press in upon," *i.e.* "assail the righteous" (so Delitzsch).

the righteous, &c.] The word "righteous" is in the singular. Whether these words be distinctly Messianic or not, they received their literal accomplishment when the false witnesses rose up against our Lord, and when Pilate, whilst protesting his innocence of the "blood of this righteous man," gave sentence as His enemies required. The LXX. has αἷμα ἀθῷον. The words of Pilate were ἀθῷός εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος τούτου (or τοῦ δικαίου τούτου), S. Matt. xxvii. 24.

22. *the rock of my refuge*] Cf. Ps. xviii. 2. The word rendered "defence" in this verse is there rendered "high tower."

23. *And he shall bring*, &c.] Rather, "And He turns back," or, "He has turned back upon them," denoting the certainty of the righteous retribution.

in their own wickedness] Rather, "by (or through) their own wickedness." The workers of iniquity (*vv.* 4, 16) are here represented as having fallen into the pit which they have dug for others. The iteration, as in *v.* 1 and in Ps. xcii. 9, adds emphasis to the prediction.

NOTE on PSALM XCIV. 11.

Some couple the last words of *v.* 10 with this verse, and read, "He that teacheth man knowledge, (even) Jehovah, knoweth the imaginations of man that they are vain." Others render, "for they (*i.e.* men) are vanity, or a breath" (cf. Pss. xxxix. 11, lxii. 9, cxliv. 4). But there is stronger authority for the A.V., the relative particle being commonly and rightly rendered elsewhere "that" (not "for"), after the same verbs (cf. Gen. xxxi. 32, xxxviii. 16; Exod. xxxiv. 29; Josh. viii. 14, &c.), whilst the other rendering would ordinarily require in the Heb. a transposition of the predicate and the subject. In 1 Cor. iii. 20 the words τῶν σοφῶν are substituted for the Heb. אדם and the LXX. τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

PSALM XCV.

1 *An exhortation to praise God,* 3 *for his greatness,* 6 *and for his goodness,* 8 *and not to tempt him.*

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

2 Let us [†] come before his pre-

[†] Heb. *prevent his face.*

PSALM XCV.

This psalm bears internal evidence of having been composed as an anthem for the temple-worship, and probably on some special occasion. It is entitled by the LXX. "A Psalm of David," and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (who quotes it, iii. 7—11, and iv. 3, 7) uses the expression "in David" with reference

sence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

3 For the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 † In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: ‖ the strength of the hills *is* his also.

5 † The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

7 For he *is* our God; and we *are* the people of his pasture, and the

† Heb. *Whose the sea is.*

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to it; but this probably implies no more than that the words in question are a quotation from the Book of Psalms, of which David was, to a considerable extent, the author, just as "the Psalms" is used in the New Testament as a synonym for the Hagiographa, because the Psalms formed the first portion of that division of the Old Testament Scriptures. The phraseology, as the psalm now stands, does not appear to be that of David, though it is quite possible that, in its original form, it may have proceeded from him. The principal Jewish writers interpret this and the following psalms up to Ps. c. of the Messiah. This psalm is one of the Friday evening psalms in the synagogue service. It has been used from a remote period in the daily services of the Western Churches, as it is still in our own, in which it has been generally known as the Invitatory Psalm, a designation evidently derived from the invitations to the worship of God contained in *vv.* 1, 2, and 6, but perhaps not without reference to the fact that the Sabbath is regarded by the Jews as "the Bride," whom by the use of this psalm, at the beginning of the Sabbath, they are supposed to go out to meet. (Cf. *v.* 2.) The psalm consists of two clearly defined portions; (1) an invitation to praise, in grateful acknowledgment of God's mercies; (2) a solemn warning applicable, primarily, to the Jewish Church and nation, but, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews testifies, a warning to the Christian Church also, against the sins of unbelief and disobedience. The connecting links with Ps. xciv. are found in xcv. 1, compared with xciv. 22; xcv. 7 compared with xciv. 14, 23; and, perhaps, in the desire to enter into the divine presence expressed in xcv. 2, 6, as contrasted with the desire to escape the divine observation expressed in xciv. 7.

1. *let us sing*] "Exult," or "shout joyfully." In this verse, as in *v.* 6, an outward expression of worship is required of the faithful in the utterance of the voice and the bowing of the knees (so Calvin, in loc.).

2. *Let us come before his presence*] Rather, "Let us go forth to meet Him," *i.e.* anticipate His presence. Cf. Ps. lvii. 8, where the Psalmist is represented as awakening the morning with his thanks and praise. The verse may be regarded as the Christian's reply to Balak's inquiry, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" Mic. vi. 6, and it is illustrated by Ps. l. 23, "Whoso offereth (lit. sacrificeth) praise (the same word which is here rendered thanksgiving and which means also a thank-offering; cf. Ps. c. 1, 4, and the notes in loc.) glorifieth me."

psalms] "Songs" or "hymns;" cf. 2 S. xxiii. 1.

3. *above all gods*] Cf. Ex. xviii. 11; Pss. lxxxvi. 8, xcii. 8, xcvii. 4, xcvi. 4; Jer. x. 10, 11. The LXX. add ὅτι οὐκ ἀπώσεται Κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ.

4. *In his hand*, &c.] Rather, "in Whose hand;" or, "because in His hand," &c.

deep places] Or, "unsearchable, unexplored recesses;" here probably the lower places of the earth; Sym. κατώτατα γῆς; Jer. fundamenta terræ; as contrasted with the higher places of the second clause.

strength] Or, "heights," LXX. τὰ ὕψη; Jer. altitudines montium. See Note at end.

5. *The sea is his*] Rather, "Whose is the sea," or "to Whom belongeth the sea."

6. *let us worship*] The word means "prostrate oneself upon the earth," in accordance with the oriental mode of adoration.

our maker] A comparison of this passage with Deut. xxxii. 15, 18, where we find Jehovah spoken of as the Rock of Israel's salvation (as in *v.* 1), and as the "God which made him," seems to warrant the inference that it is to the constitution or adoption of Israel as the people of the Lord rather than to the literal creation of man that both Moses and the Psalmist have reference. (Cf. Isai. xliii. 21, xliv. 2.)

7. *For he is our God*] The argument here reaches its climax in the personal relationship of God to His people as their covenant God. Cf. Ps. xlviii. 14. The identity of Jehovah, as the Great King, with the Covenant Angel Who went before the Israelites, cf. Exod. xxiii. 20—23, ("Beware of Him, and obey His voice;" and again, "If thou shalt indeed obey His voice,") seems to be clearly implied in this verse. Hence, an argument for the worship of Christ as the Angel of the Old Covenant with outward and inward homage is derived from this psalm.

To day, &c.] Or, "This day." "Often as they were faithless the 'to-day' sounded ever anew" (so Tholuck, in loc.). Cf. 2 Cor. vi. 2. The position of the word gives it emphasis. The apodosis seems to be wanting (then it

[a] Hebr. 3. 7. & 4. 7.
[b] Exod. 17. 2, 7. Numb. 14. 22, &c.
† Heb. *contention.*

sheep of his hand. [a]To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your heart, [b]as in the † provocation, *and* as *in* the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I sware in my wrath † that they should not enter into my rest.

† Heb. *if they enter into my rest.*

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shall be well with you), according to the Masoretic punctuation, which makes the divine voice of admonition begin in the middle of this verse.

if ye will hear] Rather, "listen to," or "obey." See Note at end.

8. *Harden not your heart*] The hardening of the heart, which, in the case of Pharaoh (Ex. vii. 3, where the word is the same as here), is ascribed to God, is here ascribed to man.

as in the provocation, &c.] Rather, **as at Meribah; as in the day of Massah.** The LXX. has ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ; so also Heb. iii. 8. The context seems to limit the reference to the event recorded in Exod. xvii. 1—7 which took place at Rephidim. The Meribah of Num. xx. is distinguished from the Meribah of Rephidim as Meribah-Kadesh; and it is the Meribah of Ex. xvii. which alone bore the double name of Massah and Meribah. (Cf. Ps. lxxxi. 7.)

9. *When*] As Deut. xi. 6; or, "where," LXX. οὗ, as in Num. xx. 13; Deut. viii. 15; Ps. lxxxiv. 3. Cf. Heb. iii. 9.

and saw] Or, "even though they saw" (or "had seen"). Cf. "yea (or although), they may forget," Isai. xlix. 15.

my work] The LXX. and Heb. iii. 9 have "my works." The difference affects the punctuation only.

10. *Forty years long*] In Heb. iii. 9 these words are connected with the preceding clause, but in the 17th verse, as here, they denote the time during which God was grieved. In the Heb. and the LXX. it is simply a question of division, not affecting the text.

was I grieved] Or, "moved with indignation." LXX. προσώχθισα. The Heb. future is used here, as elsewhere, to denote that which is customary or continuous. See Ewald's 'Heb. Gr.' § 264 (Nicholson's ed.).

with this generation] Lit. "with a generation," *i.e.* with a whole generation.

a people that do err in their heart] Lit. "a people of wanderers in heart (are) they." The same word is used Ps. cvii. 4, of the wanderings of the Israelites in the desert.

and they have not known my ways] Or, "but they knew not My ways;" in allusion probably to the way in which the people were brought out of Egypt and led by the Angel (cf. Exod. xiii. 17, 18, and xxiii. 20). The word "they" is emphatic.

11. *Unto whom*] Rather, "so that" (as in Gen. xi. 7) or "wherefore." The four verses 4, 5, 9, and 11, begin with the same word, which may be rendered "when," "where," "so that," or "wherefore," according to the connection. Cf. Gen. xiii. 16; Deut. xxviii. 27. The artificial construction forbids rigorous uniformity of rendering. It may be observed further that the last four verses of this psalm begin with the same letter of the alphabet.

that they should not enter into my rest] Lit. "if they shall come;" the common form of an oath in Heb. The reference is to the fundamental passage Num. xiv. 23, "if they shall see the land which I sware unto their fathers." Cf. Num. xiv. 30; Deut. i. 35, xii. 9. The rest here spoken of answers to the land in the above passages, and must therefore denote a place of rest. These words prove the typical character of the land of Canaan. The same train of thought is expanded in Heb. iii. and iv. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews grounds upon the renewal in this psalm of the promise and the warning given to the Israelites, the inference that the true rest promised to the faithful, "God's rest" in the highest and fullest sense of the words, is yet future. "There remaineth therefore a rest (σαββατισμὸς) to the people of God." iv. 9.

NOTES on PSALM XCV. 4 and 7.

4. It is probable that תועפת is transposed from תופעת, and that it is derived from יפע "to glitter," "appear afar off," "be prominent," rather than from יעף "to faint," or "be weary from labour." In this case the use of the word in reference to high places, as apparent from a distance, seems easy of explanation. The same word is used of the wild bull, or buffalo, Num. xxiii. 22, xxiv. 8, apparently in the sense of *strength*. It is also used in Job xxii. 25, where see note.

7. If the optative sense of the particle here employed could be established, the words might be rendered, "Oh! that ye would hearken to His voice!" but this signification is extremely doubtful, and Exod. xxiii. 22 seems to point to the other construction, as in the A.V. This construction is confirmed by Heb. iii. 7, and iv. 7, Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν: where the LXX. version is followed in connecting the two clauses.

PSALM XCVI.

1 *An exhortation to praise God,* 4 *for his greatness,* 8 *for his kingdom,* 11 *for his general judgment.*

hron.

O [a] SING unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

4 For the LORD *is* great, and greatly to be praised: he *is* to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations

PSALM XCVI.

This psalm has been rightly designated as a missionary hymn for all ages. Its liturgical character is decisively attested both by internal and external evidence. It is entitled by the LXX. "A Song of David;" and if the commonly received interpretation of 1 Chro. xvi. 7 be correct, the occasion of the composition of this psalm, in its original form, was the removal of the ark from the house of Obed-edom to the tent which David had prepared for it on Mount Zion.

But whether the psalm was originally composed by David or not (a point which 1 Chro. xvi. does not seem absolutely to determine), there is ground for believing that, as it here stands (and as with slight verbal discrepancies it is found in 1 Chro. xvi.), this psalm is the production of a later period than that of David. For (1) the LXX. connect the psalm with the building of the second temple, intending, as it would seem, to denote its adaptation to that occasion. (2) The subject-matter and the phraseology, more particularly the *anadiplosis* or iteration of the psalm, *i.e.* the repetition of the same words, or of the same phrases, point to a later date than that of David. (3) It is found in 1 Chro. xvi. in close connection with portions of the cvth, cvith and cviith psalms, and the composite psalm of praise there recorded ends with the doxology, slightly varied, which closes the 4th Book of the Psalter. Like the preceding psalm, to which it is joined in four codices, this psalm is predictive of "the gospel of the kingdom" (S. Matt. ix. 35); but, whether the first and second Advents of the Messiah be or be not regarded here, as in other Old Test. prophecies, as parts of one connected whole, this psalm has reference to the coming of the Messiah as David's Lord, not as David's Son; as Jehovah, the Lord and King of the whole earth; not as the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

The first portion of the psalm naturally divides itself into two strophes, each consisting of six lines. The remaining portion, beginning with *v.* 10, may either be divided into two similar strophes, each consisting of two verses, or it may be regarded as one irregular strophe of eleven lines. The former division is the more natural as well as the more symmetrical. The disorganization of the strophical structure in 1 Chro. xvi., as well as the composite character of the whole piece, seems to point to the earlier date of that form of the psalm which is preserved in the Psalter. The concluding verses of the psalm abound with allusions to the prophecies of Isaiah. The phraseology is, for the most part, borrowed from that prophet, and the repeated instances of iteration remind us forcibly of his style.

1. The opening words are found verbatim in Isai. xlii. 10. Rashi observes, that wherever the expression occurs, "a new song," it refers to the future, *i.e.* to the time of the Messiah. It is true that the phrase "a new song" occurs in Ps. xl. 3, which is ascribed to David, and that the fuller expression "sing unto Him a new song" is found in Ps. xxxiii. 3, but the phraseology of the latter psalm, and its mention of horses, seem to point to a later date of composition than the time of David (see note on xxxiii. 17). The "new song" is not the psalm itself, but the ascription of praise which shall ascend from a regenerated world at the Advent of Jehovah predicted in *v.* 13. (Cf. Rev. xv. 3.)

2. *shew forth*] This verb, though not exclusively used by Isaiah, is employed by him in a distinctive sense as denoting the proclamation of the gospel. (Cf. Isai. lii. 7, lx. 6.) (It answers to the Greek word εὐαγγελίζεσθε. The title of the gospels in the Hebrew New Testament, corresponding to εὐαγγέλιον, is derived from the same root.)

from day to day] *i.e.* "every day;" cf. Esther iii. 7.

3. *the heathen*] Or, "the Gentiles."

his wonders] This word is frequently employed with reference to the miracles wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness.

all people] Lit. "all the peoples," or "nations."

4. *For the LORD is great,* &c.] The former clause of this verse is taken verbatim from Ps. xlviii. 1; the second clause seems to refer back to Ps. xlvii. 2.

greatly to be praised] *i.e.* worthy to be celebrated in festive songs.

all gods] Cf. 2 Chro. xxxii. 15, where the singular form occurs.

5. *For all the gods of the nations are idols*] This verse shews that the word translated

are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

6 Honour and majesty *are* before him: strength and beauty *are* in his sanctuary.

7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

8 Give unto the LORD the glory †*due unto* his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.

† Heb. *of his name.*

9 O worship the LORD ‖ in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

‖ Or, *in the glorious sanctuary.*

10 Say among the heathen *that* [b] the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.

[b] Ps. 93. 1. & 97. 1.

"gods" in the preceding verse is rightly so rendered, and not, as some propose, "angels." The word rendered "idols" means "powerless things," or "vanities;" not as LXX. δαιμόνια; and Jerome, *dæmonia.* It is used more frequently by Isaiah than by any other writer; cf. ii. 8, 18, 20, x. 10, xix. 3. The statement is similar to that of S. Paul in 1 Cor. viii. 4, "an idol is nothing." We may compare with it Isai. xli. 24, xliv. 9, 10. The utter vanity and incapacity of the gods of the nations is contrasted with the might and majesty of the Creator. The word rendered "nations" is the same which is rendered "people" in *v.* 3; or, as it is literally translated, "peoples." It is a different word from that which is rendered "heathen" in *vv.* 3, 10.

made the heavens] Cf. Isai. xlii. 5, xliv. 24.

6. *Honour and majesty*] The paronomasia of the Hebrew is lost in the translation.

Instead of "strength and beauty are in His *sanctuary*," we read in 1 Chro. xvi. 27, "strength and gladness are in His *place*." It is remarkable that in Isai. lx. 13, where the Gentiles are represented as bringing their offerings into the courts of the Lord's house, the two words are combined, "to beautify the *place* of my *sanctuary*," where also the verb translated "beautify" is that from which the noun here rendered "beauty" is derived. The reference in the word which is here rendered "sanctuary" (which is used both of the tabernacle and the temple) is clearly to the earthly sanctuary; and hence it seems probable that the psalm was composed before the Captivity, the word rendered "strength" having special reference to the ark, and the word rendered "before Him" having a similar reference to the Shechinah, or manifested glory of Jehovah in the most holy place; neither of which seems to have belonged to the second temple.

7. *Give unto the* LORD*...glory and strength*] *i.e.* ascribe to Jehovah glory and strength in a song of praise. The words are borrowed from Ps. xxix. 1, as are the following words from the next verse of the same psalm. The sudden change in construction is, as Dr Phillips observes, highly poetical, and seems to imply that this and the following verses would be taken up by a different part of the choir.

8. *the glory due unto his name*] Lit. "the glory of His name."

bring an offering] A collective singular, in allusion to the eastern custom of bringing gifts when admitted into the presence of kings and rulers. The word "minchah" appears to be here used, not in the restricted sense of a vegetable offering, which belongs to it in the Levitical law, but in the more comprehensive sense in which we find it used both in Gen. iv. 3, and also by the prophets. Cf. Ps. cxli. 2 and note in loc.

his courts] A probable indication that the psalm, in the form in which it is here found, was written later than the time of David; see note on Ps. xcii. 13.

9. *the beauty of holiness*] The quotation from the xxixth ps. is here continued. There seems to be an allusion to *v.* 6, where the word rendered "majesty" is the masculine form of that here rendered "beauty," and the word rendered "sanctuary" is derived from the same root as the word here rendered "holiness." For the meaning of the phrase see note on Ps. xxix. 2. The beauty of holiness may be compared, as by Delitzsch, to the wedding-garment of the New Testament parable.

fear before him] Or, "tremble before Him," as Ps. xcvii. 4.

10. *Say among the heathen*, &c.] Rather, "Say among the Gentiles, Jehovah is King." Cf. Ps. xciii. 1 (where see note), also xcvii. 1, xcix. 1. An ancient gloss, but without authority from existing MSS., or ancient versions, viz. ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου, was received by S. Justin Martyr and others as a genuine portion of the text. The Psalmist is here again carried onward by the inspiring Spirit into the great day of the Lord, and calls upon the faithful to proclaim the personal Advent of Jehovah and His assumption of the kingdom.

the world also shall be established] Rather, "therefore the world shall be established." This clause is quoted verbatim from Ps. xciii. 1. It looks back apparently to *v.* 5, in which mention is made of the heavens, and is the link between that verse and the 11th, in which mention is made both of the heavens and earth. We find the order of this and some other clauses changed in 1 Chro. xvi.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

PSALM XCVII.

1 *The majesty of God's kingdom.* 7 *The church rejoiceth at God's judgments upon idolaters.* 10 *An exhortation to godliness and gladness.*

THE LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the † multitude of isles be glad *thereof*.

† Heb. *many*, or, *great isles*

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it shall not be moved] This may be understood of exemption both from moral and physical causes of disturbance; cf. Ps. xlvi. 5. See note on Ps. lx. 2.

he shall judge the people righteously] Lit. "He shall judge (or He judges) peoples in righteousness or equity," *i.e.* He shall realise in His equitable administration of the world the types imperfectly afforded in the administration of Israel's most upright judges; cf. Gen. xxx. 6, where the same word (a different word from that in *v.* 13) is used in the sense of avenging the cause of Rachel. It means also to punish, Gen. xv. 14. Cf. Pss. vii. 8, ix. 8, lxxii. 2.

11. *Let the heavens rejoice*, &c.] Or, "The heavens rejoice, and the earth exults: the sea roars and its fulness." Cf. Isai. xlii. 10, where the last clause occurs. As the whole creation, both animate and inanimate, has groaned beneath the weight of the curse, so shall the whole creation partake of the great deliverance. Many of Isaiah's prophecies have reference to this subject, *e.g.* xxxv. 1, xlii. 10, xliv. 23, xlv. 8, xlix. 13, lv. 12; and S. Paul (Rom. viii. 21) distinctly asserts the same truth. The analogy between S. Luke xxi. 25, "the sea and the waves roaring," and the second clause of this verse, is rather apparent than real. A closer analogy is furnished in Ps. xcviii. 7, where the same phrase occurs, and is shewn by comparison with *v.* 8, "Let the floods clap their hands," &c. to be a sound of joy and exultation.

12. *then*] Or, "at that time." The word thus translated, as in Isai. xxxv. 5, 6, looks forward to the times of the Messiah's Advent.

all the trees of the wood] This seems evidently borrowed from Isai. xliv. 23 and lv. 12.

rejoice] Or, "sing joyously;" so Dr Kay.

13. *for he cometh*] Or, "is come." The words rendered "He shall judge (or rather He judges) the world with righteousness," are taken from Ps. ix. 8.

PSALM XCVII.

The key-note of this series of psalms, "Jehovah is King," is again sounded in the first verse. The subject is the same as in the preceding psalm, viz. the personal Advent of Jehovah, which is represented in terms borrowed from the Pentateuch, and from those earlier psalms which describe the Theophany on occasion of the giving of the law. All nature is moved at the divine presence. The flames which once lighted up Mount Sinai, at the appearance of the great King enlighten the whole world; and by them His enemies, "who would not that He should reign over them," are consumed. The heavens which now proclaim the glory of God shall then attest His righteousness. His glory is displayed throughout the whole earth; and, whilst the worshippers of false gods are confounded, Zion rejoices and is glad; and all nations come and worship before their King; for His judgments are made manifest (Rev. xv. 4).

Whether the quotation in Heb. i. 6 be from this psalm or not, and whether the reference of the writer be to the first, or to the second, introduction into the world of the First-begotten (see note on *v.* 7), the psalm itself contains conclusive evidence that it reaches forward not only to the first Advent of Christ, but also from thence to "the consummation of all things." (See Bp. Wordsworth in loc.) It must be observed, at the same time, that not only the phraseology of this psalm, but also the analogy of other psalms, suggest the probability that its *immediate* occasion was some great national deliverance, which it was the object of the writer to commemorate in this and the other Liturgical Anthems which precede and follow it.

The psalm naturally divides itself into four strophes, each consisting of three verses.

The connecting links with Ps. xcvi. are numerous; *vv.* 1, 8 of Ps. xcvii. answer to *v.* 11 of Ps. xcvi.; *v.* 3, "before Him," corresponds with *v.* 6; *v.* 4 with *v.* 9, where the verb rendered "tremble" in the former case, and "fear" in the latter, in the A.V., is the same in the Heb.; *v.* 6, "all the people see His glory," with *v.* 3, "declare His glory among the heathen;" *v.* 7 (where the idols are contrasted with the true Elohim) with *v.* 5; *v.* 9, "Thou art exalted far above all gods," answers to "He is to be feared above all gods," *v.* 4 of Ps. xcvi.

1. *The LORD reigneth*] See note on Ps. xciii. 1.

let the earth rejoice] Or, "the earth is glad;"

2 Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: [a] righteousness and judgment *are* the [1] habitation of his throne.

[a] Ps. 89. 14. [1] Or, *establishment*.

3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.

5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

6 The heavens declare his right-

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not the land of Canaan only, but (as in *v.* 11 of the preceding psalm, and as further explained by the words which immediately follow, and by *vv.* 5 and 9) the whole earth, including both the animate and inanimate creation. Cf. Isai. xlii. 10—12.

let the multitude of isles be glad] Lit. "many isles rejoice" (cf. Ps. xcvi. 11). The word "many" is used here as elsewhere (Isai. lii. 15, liii. 12; cf. Rom. v. 15, 19; Heb. ix. 28) for *all*. The Hebrew writers appear to have used the word rendered *islands* to denote all those countries which were separated from themselves by the sea. (Cf. Gen. x. 5, and the note on it; Ps. lxxii. 10; Isai. xli. 1, 5, xlii. 4, 10, 12, xlix. 1; Jer. xxv. 22, xxxi. 10.) Thus the inhabitants of the isles became synonymous with the Gentile world, as appears from the fact that Isai. xlii. 4, "the isles shall wait for His law," is explained in S. Matt. xii. 21 by the words "in His name shall the *Gentiles* trust." This is indicated also by the parallelisms which are found in several of the passages to which reference is made above.

2. *Clouds and darkness*] The same words, as also "fire," which occurs in *v.* 3, are found in Deut. iv. 11, and v. 22, with reference to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. In the former of these passages another Hebrew word occurs which is translated "darkness," and the word which is used here is there rendered "thick darkness." Cf. Exod. xix. 16, 18; Ps. xviii. 9, 11, 12. Clouds and darkness do not belong to the divine nature, but are characteristic of the divine dispensations. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" but "His way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters: and His footsteps are not known."

the habitation of his throne] Rather, "the foundation or basis of His throne," *i.e.* on which His throne rests. The words are taken from Ps. lxxxix. 14. Cf. Ps. civ. 5; Ezra ii. 68.

3. *A fire*] Rather, "Fire," by which God is represented, ("our God is a consuming fire,") or "lightning." Cf. Exod. ix. 23, and the footnote in loc.; also S. Matt. xxiv. 27. A similar expression occurs in Ps. l. 3. The same order of events is marked in both psalms. In Ps. l. we read first of the devouring fire (*v.* 3), and then of the gathering together of the saints (*v.* 5). In this psalm we find first a description of the destruction of the enemies (*v.* 3), and then of the rejoicing of Zion (*v.* 8). Our Lord confirms both the general truth of the prediction, and also the order of the events foretold in both psalms, when, in His prophecy of the end of the world, He thus describes the command which will be given to the reapers, "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (S. Matt. xiii. 30).

4. *His lightnings enlightened*, &c.] Or, "have enlightened." The Psalmist describes the scene as if actually present to his view. The same expression occurs in Ps. lxxvii. 18, in connection with the passage through the Red Sea (cf. Hab. iii. throughout). Our Lord confirms this prediction also in the description of His own Advent (S. Luke xvii. 24).

5. *The hills melted like wax*, &c.] Or, "are molten." Cf. Mic. i. 4. The frequent allusions in this series of psalms to the convulsions of the earth, as in *v.* 4, and in this verse to the melting of the hills, suggest the idea that some great earthquake, like that in the days of king Uzziah, was fresh in the memory of the writer (cf. Amos i. 1). Other passages in the writings of the prophets connect the levelling of the mountains with the personal Advent of the Lord, as *e.g.* Isai. xl. 4, 5, and Zech. xiv. 4, 5, where express reference is made, by way of illustration, to the great earthquake in the days of Uzziah. (See Excursus on this series of psalms.)

at the presence of the Lord, &c.] Rather, "by reason of the presence of Jehovah, of the presence of the Lord of the whole earth." The double appellation probably denotes the Advent of the Lord in His twofold aspect—both as the Judge and also as the Avenger—to judge and to take vengeance on His enemies, to judge and to avenge the cause of His people. This appears to be one of the few passages in the Old Testament in which the predictions of the Advent of the promised Messiah and of Jehovah Himself no longer run, as they do for the most part, in parallel lines, but converge to one point. (See Delitzsch on Isai. xl. 10, and Introd. to the Psalter, § 18.) Cf. Isai. xxviii. 16. The phrase "Lord of the whole earth" occurs elsewhere only five times in the Old Testament, viz. Josh. iii. 11, 13; Mic. iv. 13; and Zech. iv. 14, vi. 5. The full expression would be, "by reason of the presence of Jehovah, by reason of the presence of Jehovah, the Lord of the whole earth," *i.e.* of the earth now completely reduced into obedience to His sceptre.

eousness, and all the people see his glory.

[b] Exod. 20. 4. Lev. 26. 1. Deut. 5. 8. Hebr. 1. 6.

7 [b] Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all *ye* gods.

8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD.

9 For thou, LORD, *art* high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.

10 Ye that love the LORD, [c] hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

[c] Ps. 34. 14. Amos 5. 15. Rom. 12. 9.

11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

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6. *The heavens declare his righteousness*] The same expression occurs in Ps. l. 6. It may refer to some supernatural attestation of the sovereignty of the Judge.

all the people see his glory] Rather, "all the peoples, or nations." Presuming that the prophecies of Isaiah were composed before this psalm (see Excursus), these words are the echo of many passages in those prophecies in which the universal manifestation of the glory of the Lord at His second Advent is foretold in almost identical terms, as *e.g.* xl. 5, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;" and lxvi. 18, "I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see My glory."

7. *Confounded be all they*, &c.] Rather, "Ashamed are all they, the worshippers of images, who boast themselves of idols (or idol-gods)." The verbal resemblance to Isai. xlii. 17, and xliv. 9, should be observed. Cf. Jer. x. 14. S. Augustine, in his commentary on this passage, thus describes the confusion of idolaters in his own day: "Erubescant qui adorant lapides, quia lapides illi mortui erant, nos vivum lapidem invenimus!...Dimittunt templa, currunt ad ecclesias. Confunduntur omnes qui adorant sculptilia. Adhuc quærunt adorare sculptilia, noluerunt deserere idola, deserti sunt ab idolis." The same confusion, as some think, is yet more graphically described in Rev. vi. 12—17.

worship him, all ye gods] This clause may be rendered imperatively, as in the A.V., "Bow down before Him, all ye gods," or affirmatively, "All gods have bowed down before Him." The LXX. read προσκυνήσατε αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ. The Vulg., "Adorate eum angeli ejus." The Syr. also understands the passage of the angels. Both usage and context, however, seem opposed to this interpretation. As regards usage, there seems to be no clear instance in which the word *Elohim* is employed to denote, as its primary signification, the angels. (See note on Ps. viii. 5.) As regards the context, it seems clear that the allusion here (as in Pss. xcv. 3, xcvi. 5, and *v.* 9 of this psalm) is primarily to those cosmical powers which had been deified not only in the Gentile world, but also by many of the Jews, who, at all periods of their history before the Captivity, were prone to lapse into idolatry. Cf. Acts vii. 42 (to which early idolatrous worship there is no reference in the Pentateuch); also 2 K. xxi. 3, 5; Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5. Jerome renders the clause thus: *Adorate eum omnes dii.* Inasmuch, however, as angels may have become the objects of idolatrous worship in the days of the Psalmist, there seems to be no sufficient reason for excluding a reference to them in this place, in support of which reference Heb. i. 6 may be urged, which (if not taken from the addition found in all codices of the LXX. to Deut. xxxii. 43) is a direct quotation from this verse. The words with which the citation is introduced, if the reference be to this psalm, have an important bearing upon its interpretation. Dr Kay renders them thus: "When He again introduces His First-born into the world, He says:" words which, as has been fully shewn by Delitzsch and others, must be referred, both on grammatical and exegetical grounds, not to the Incarnation, but to the Second Advent.

8. *Zion heard, and was glad*] These words are borrowed almost verbatim from Ps. xlviii. 11. They describe in glowing terms the joy of the Church at the coming of her Lord; in accordance with His own words as recorded in S. Luke xxi. 28, "Then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." The very same verbs which are used in *v.* 1, to denote the joy of the earth at large, are here employed as descriptive of that of Zion.

9. *high above all the earth*] These words are taken verbatim from Ps. lxxxiii. 18. It should be remarked that the Hebrew word translated "Most High," and the word translated "Thou art exalted," are cognate in their etymology. Cf. Ps. xlvii. 2, 9.

10. *hate evil*, &c.] The promised deliverance of Jehovah is a reason for the hatred and avoidance of evil. Cf. Pss. xxxiv. 14, 16, 21, xxxvii. 27, 28.

he preserveth, &c.] Or, if the accentuation be disregarded, "He Who preserveth the souls of His saints will deliver them from the hand of the wicked." So Delitzsch.

11. *Light is sown for the righteous*] The LXX. has ἀνέτειλε, *i.e.* is sprung up. This

12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks [1]at the remembrance of his holiness.

[1] Or, *to the memorial.*

PSALM XCVIII.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth the Jews,* 4 *the Gentiles,* 7 *and all the creatures to praise God.*

A Psalm.

O SING unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

2 [a]The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he [1]openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

[a] Isai. 52. 10. [1] Or, *revealed.*

3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of

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is based on a different reading (זרח, instead of זרע), which seems to have had its origin in the parallel passage in Ps. cxii. 4. There seems, however, to be no necessity for changing the received text, which contains a beautiful and expressive figure. Cf. Prov. xi. 18; Hos. viii. 7, x. 12; S. James iii. 18. The light, now sown for the righteous, shall spring up in that day, when unto those that fear His name "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings." Cf. "Et jam prima novo spargebat lumine terras," 'Æn.' IV. 584; also, "spargit lumine terras," Lucret. II. 143, and "lumine conserit arva," ib. 211. Milton also uses the same figure of the dew:

"Now morn, her rosy steps in th' Eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl." 'Paradise Lost,' V. 1, 2.

Hitzig compares κίδναται and σκίδναται, used of the dawn and of the sun.

the righteous] Lit. "the righteous (man);" a collective singular.

12. *Rejoice in the LORD,* &c.] Cf. *vv.* 1, 8, where the same verb is rendered "be glad," and *v.* 11, where the cognate noun is rendered "gladness." The first clause of the verse is found almost verbatim in Ps. xxxii. 11, and the second clause verbatim in Ps. xxx. 4.

PSALM XCVIII.

This is the only psalm of the series, beginning with the 93rd and ending with the 99th, which bears any inscription in the Hebrew, and it is the only psalm throughout the Psalter which bears as its inscription the single word "Mizmor," *i.e.* psalm. The primary meaning of the verb from which *mizmor* is derived is to *cut* or *prune.* Mendelssohn says that "it is right that it should be applied to the song which is accompanied by a musical instrument, in the case where the song is divided by means of this accompaniment into different portions." The clearly marked division of this psalm into three strophes, each consisting of three verses, which was probably indicated in its liturgical use by means of the instrumental accompaniments, confirms the probability of the accuracy of this definition. The inscription in the LXX. is "A Psalm of David." In the Syriac the inscription is, "Of the redemption of the people from Egypt." It should be observed, however, that the deliverance from Egypt is but a type of the deliverance promised in this psalm, and that "the new song" of *v.* 1 is not the song of Moses, as recorded in Exod. xv., but "the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb," Rev. xv. 3. The beginning and the end of the psalm are taken from the 96th; and the resemblance throughout is so striking that there can be little doubt of the identity of authorship. The psalm abounds, even more than the other psalms of this series, with expressions borrowed from earlier psalms, and from the prophecies of Isaiah, especially the later prophecies. (See Excursus on these psalms.) Its composite character points to its *comparatively* late date. Amongst the points of connection with Ps. xcvi. the following may be mentioned. Both psalms begin with the same words. The "marvellous things," *v.* 1, may be compared with xcvi. 3, where the same Hebrew word is translated "wonders:" the words "in the sight of the heathen," or "Gentiles," *v.* 2, with xcvi. 3: the "righteousness" and "truth" of *vv.* 2, 3, with the display of the same attributes foretold in xcvi. 13: "Jehovah, the King," *v.* 6, with xcvi. 10: "Let the sea roar and its fulness," *v.* 7, with the same expression in xcvi. 11; and *v.* 9, with xcvi. 13, with which it is almost identical. The subject of this psalm, as of most of the other psalms of this series, is the final demonstration to the world of the salvation wrought out for the people of God, and the universal acknowledgment by its inhabitants of His righteousness, His faithfulness, and His majesty. It became a part of the daily service of the English Church in 1552 A.D.

1. *a new song*] See on Ps. xcvi. 1.

marvellous things] See note on Ps. xcvi. 3.

hath gotten him the victory] Rather, "hath wrought deliverance, or salvation, for Him." Cf. *vv.* 2, 3, in which the word rendered "salvation" is derived from the same root as the verb which is here translated "gotten the victory."

2. *his righteousness*] Equivalent to "His salvation" in the parallel clause, as in the later chapters of Isaiah.

the heathen] Or, "the Gentiles."

Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.

7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

8 Let the floods clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together

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3. *his mercy and his truth toward*, &c.] Rather, "His lovingkindness and His faithfulness for, or on behalf of," &c. Cf. Ps. cvi. 45, "He remembered for them His covenant," *i. e.* to fulfil it; also S. Luke i. 54, μνησθῆναι ἐλέους...τῷ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ; where it seems that the words μνησθῆναι ἐλέους τῷ Ἀβραὰμ should be joined together, and the intervening words considered as parenthetical.

all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God] These words occur verbatim in Isai. lii. 10. Cf. Isai. xlix. 6; also Rom. xi. 12, 25, 26; where, as in this verse, the salvation of Israel is connected with the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles.

4. *make a loud noise*] Or, "break forth into a loud shout." The verb thus rendered is used in this signification only in this place, and in the earlier and later prophecies of Isaiah, where it occurs six times, viz. xiv. 7, xliv. 23, xlix. 13, lii. 9, liv. 1, lv. 12; and in each place in conjunction with some form of the word rendered "rejoice." It probably denotes, as Le Clerc (in loc.) has observed; sounds made with the mouth, as distinguished from instrumental music, and is therefore correctly rendered "break forth into shouting."

sing praise] Rather, "play," *i.e.* accompany the song with the music of the stringed and wind instruments described in *vv.* 5, 6.

5. *the voice of a psalm*] This phrase occurs elsewhere only in Isai. li. 3.

6. *With trumpets*] This is the only place in the Book of Psalms in which the Hebrew word so rendered occurs. They were appointed to be used only by the priests (see note on Num. x. 8). If there be any allusion here to their original use, we must understand the summons to proclaim the praises of Jehovah with the trumpet, as an indication that this psalm points to a period when the ideal of the Jewish nation as a nation of priests shall have been realised. It appears, however, that in the later periods of Jewish history the trumpet, as well as the cornet (see note on Num. x. 2 for the distinction between them), was used on extraordinary occasions, not only by the priests, but also by the Levites, and even by the people, as *e. g.* by the Levites, at the bringing up of the ark (1 Chro. xvi. 42), and by the people generally, at the coronation of Joash (2 K. xi. 14). At the same time, the distinctive use of the trumpets by the priests seems to have been partially retained. Cf. 2 Chro. xiii. 14; Ezra iii. 10; Neh. xii. 41. This use of trumpets and cornets agrees with the conclusion which would naturally be drawn from the character of those instruments, the effect of which would be to confound rather than to aid an ordinary choir. Their use on occasion of the proclamation or coronation of kings, as of Absalom (2 S. xv. 10); of Solomon (1 K. i. 34); of Jehu (2 K. ix. 13); and of Joash (2 K. xi. 14), taken in conjunction with the words "before Jehovah the King," confirms the view that the reference is to that signal assumption of the kingdom by the Redeemer at His second Advent, which is the subject of so large a portion of ancient prophecy.

make a joyful noise] The verb thus translated is the same as that which occurs in *v.* 4, where it is translated in the same manner, and where, as in other places, it includes, if it does not primarily denote, the shout of the human voice (cf. Judg. xv. 14; 1 S. xvii. 20), which often accompanied the blast of trumpets or cornets. Cf. Ezra iii. 10—13; also 1 Thess. iv. 16, "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." See Note at end.

7. *Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof*] Verbatim from Ps. xcvi. 11 (where see note). Cf. Ps. xxiv. 1.

the world, and they that dwell therein] Verbatim from Ps. xxiv. 1. The word rendered "world" in this and the ninth verse occurs eight times in the other books of the Psalter, seven times in this fourth book, and nine times in the earlier prophecies of Isaiah.

8. *Let the floods clap their hands*] A bold metaphor taken from Isai. lv. 12, "and all the trees of the field (or wood) shall clap their hands." The change of two letters in the word translated "floods" would convert it into the word translated "forests" in Ps. xxix. 9. There is, however, neither authority nor necessity for the change. On the contrary, the transfer of the figure from the woods to the streams is very striking—the more so when taken in connection with Ps. xciii. 3. There may also be an allusion to the closing of the waters of the Red Sea over the Egyp-

b Ps. 96. 13.

9 Before the LORD; [b] for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

tians. Cf. Ps. xlvii. 1, where we read both of shouting and of clapping of hands; and especially 2 K. xi. 12, where the people are represented as clapping their hands at the coronation of Joash, in connection with the blowing of trumpets already noticed. It must be observed, however, in both these cases that the Hebrew word translated "clapped" is different from that employed in this place. The precise expression occurs only in Isai. lv. 12. The nearest approximation to it elsewhere is Hab. iii. 10, "The deep...lifted up his hands on high."

9. *for he cometh*] Rather, "for He is come." See note on Ps. xcvi. 13, which verse, with the exception of the repetition which occurs there, and of the last word, agrees verbatim with this verse.

NOTE on PSALM XCVIII. 6.

The Jews distinguish between the mode of blowing the trumpet or cornet indicated by the Hiphil form of the verb רוע and that indicated by תקע. The former they consider to be a rough, broken sound, as though the root were רעע; the latter, a smooth, equable sound. It seems more probable, however, that the sound indicated by תקע was a *single*, sharp blast (not a blast with "one trumpet," as in the A. V. of Num. x. 4); and that the sound indicated by הריע, *i.e.* תרועה, was a protracted blast, or a succession of blasts. This explanation is in entire harmony with the use of the verb תקע and the noun תרועה in Num. x. 6, תרועה יתקעו, *i.e.* "they shall blow a continuous peal," or "a succession of blasts," and of the two verbs in the following verse, תתקעו ולא תריעו, *i.e.*, "ye shall blow one sharp blast, and not a continuous blast," or "a succession of blasts." See note in loc. Cf. also Ps. cl. 3, 5.

PSALM XCIX.

1 *The prophet, setting forth the kingdom of God in Zion,* 5 *exhorteth all, by the example of forefathers, to worship God at his holy hill.*

THE LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth *between* the cherubims; let the earth † be moved.

† Heb. stagger.

PSALM XCIX.

This is the last of that series of royal psalms (for the c[th] ps. may be regarded rather as the Doxology which closes the strain) which announce the fact, and which describe the results, of the Advent of Jehovah, and the third of those pss. which begin with the watchword "Jehovah is King." Its connection retrospectively with Isaiah's vision (Isai. vi.), and prospectively with Apoc. xi., xiv., xv. and xvi., should not be overlooked. It has been described by Delitzsch as "the earthly echo of the Seraphic Trisagion." It might perhaps be more correctly described as the actual realization of that state of blessedness which was foretold in the Seraphic song heard by the prophet, but which awaits the great day of the Advent, in order to its actual inauguration; a state in which sin and the curse shall be unknown, and the earth itself shall be full of the glory of Jehovah, as its universally acknowledged Lord and King. (Cf. S. John xii. 41.) This glory of the New Jerusalem and of the tabernacle of God amongst men is portrayed in imagery borrowed from the ritual of the Jewish temple, and from the recorded dealings of God with Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. These (cf. Apoc. v. 8—10) may be regarded as the representatives of the old Testament Church, or of the converted Jews as a nation, or of the general assembly and Church of the firstborn (see Thrupp's 'Introduction to the Psalms,' II. p. 148).

The two chief divisions of the psalm are clearly marked by the refrain of *vv.* 5 and 9. A threefold strophical division is also marked by the repetition at the close of each strophe of the same, or almost the same words; "Holy is He" (*v.* 3); "Holy is He" (*v.* 5); "Holy is Jehovah our God" (*v.* 9). Cf. Apoc. xvi. 5, where the best reading is, "Which art, and wast, and shalt be, The Holy One." The remarkable correspondence of Apoc. xi. 15—18 with this series of psalms, and with the xcixth in particular, can scarcely escape observation; and it serves as a key to the interpretation of several portions of this psalm which would otherwise be involved in much obscurity.

1. *The LORD reigneth*] See note on Ps. xciii. 1.

let the people tremble] Rather, "the peoples, or nations, tremble, or are angry;" LXX. ὀργιζέσθωσαν λαοί; cf. Apoc. xi. 18, τὰ ἔθνη ὠργίσθησαν.

he sitteth between the cherubims] Rather (as Ewald, Hupfeld, Hengstenberg, &c.), "(even) He Who sitteth upon the cherubim." Cf.

2 The LORD *is* great in Zion; and he *is* high above all the people.

3 Let them praise thy great and terrible name; *for* it *is* holy.

4 The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

5 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; *for* [1] he *is* holy.

[1] Or, *it is holy.*

6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

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1 S. iv. 4; 2 S. vi. 2; 2 K. xix. 15; 1 Chro. xiii. 6; Isai. xxxvii. 16. These words either define, as some think, the manner in which Jehovah reigns, "He reigns, sitting upon the cherubim;" or, as seems more probable, when we take into account the general tenor of this series of psalms, and especially *vv.* 2 and 5 of this psalm, they imply that He Who, in the days of the writer, "dwelt between the cherubim," enthroned, as it were, upon those mysterious forms, and resting His feet upon the Ark beneath them (*v.* 5), is beheld in prophetic vision as "reigning in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients, gloriously." (Cf. *vv.* 2 and 5 of this ps. with Isai. xxiv. 23; and see the Excursus on these psalms, with reference to the importance of this verse and of *vv.* 4, 5, as bearing on the chronology of this series of psalms.)

let the earth be moved] Rather, "the earth is moved, or quakes." (The apocopated form, which is not found here, is generally used when the imperative or optative sense is signified; cf. 1 S. ix. 20; 2 S. xix. 37; 1 K. xvii. 21; Ps. lxxiv. 21.) There is, probably, an allusion here, as elsewhere in this series of psalms, to the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, the only terror, as has often been observed, of which the edge is sharpened, not blunted, by familiarity; cf. Isai. xxiv. 19, 20, "The earth is moved exceedingly;" "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard." "Terra, quamdiu immota fuerit, sanari non potest; quando vero mota fuerit et intremuerit, tunc recipiet sanitatem" ('Breviarium' sub nomine Hieronymi); cf. Apoc. xi. 19, καὶ σεισμός.

2. *The LORD is great in Zion*] The reference seems to be to some signal exhibition of divine power and favour, in and on behalf of Zion, which shall excite the admiration of all nations; cf. Pss. lxxvi. 1, 2, xcviii. 3, 4; Isai. xxiv. 23. The Lamb is beheld by S. John (Apoc. xiv. 1) as "standing on the Mount Sion," when the "new song" (*v.* 3), to which reference is made in Pss. xcvi. and xcviii., is sung. Cf. Apoc. xi. 17, Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι.

3. *Let them praise*, &c.] Rather, "They praise." The epithets "great and terrible" are applied in Deut. x. 17 to Jehovah Himself.

for it is holy] Rather, "Holy is He." This rendering seems to be determined by *vv.* 5 and 9, as well as by the fundamental passage, Isai. vi. 3, which also, as well as the probability that the words are a response of other voices, accounts for the use of the third where we might have expected that of the second person.

4. *The king's strength also*, &c.] The construction is doubtful. The words may be rendered as follows: "And the strength (or might) of a king who loveth judgment (cf. Ps. xi. 7; Isai. lxi. 8) Thou (even Thou) hast established; equity, judgment, and righteousness, Thou (even Thou) hast executed." (See Note at end.) Though the ultimate reference seems to be to the King Jehovah, Who shall hereafter fill Zion with *judgment* and *righteousness* (cf. Isai. xxxiii. 5), it is reasonable to suppose that the immediate allusion is to the reign of the Jewish king, whether Hezekiah, or, as some suppose, Josiah. The words, "executed judgment and justice," are used as characteristic of the reigns of David and Solomon. Cf. 2 S. viii. 15; 1 K. x. 9; 1 Chro. xviii. 14; 2 Chro. ix. 8; also Isai. xxxiii. 5.

5. *at his footstool*] The word translated "footstool" occurs only in five other places. In two of these (viz. Ps. cx. 1, and Isai. lxvi. 1) it is used figuratively, of the enemies of Jehovah, and of the earth; in the other places (viz. 1 Chro. xxviii. 2; Ps. cxxxii. 7, and Lam. ii. 1) it seems to be employed to denote the ark. That this is the reference here is rendered more probable from Apoc. xi. 19, καὶ ὤφθη ἡ κιβωτὸς τῆς διαθήκης τοῦ Κυρίου (or αὐτοῦ). Cf. Isai. lx. 13, "the place of My feet," where also allusion seems to be made to the ark, though ultimate reference may be made to the earth itself; also Ezek. xliii. 7, "the place of the soles of My feet." The preposition translated "at" probably means here "towards." (Cf. 1 K. viii. 30, 38, 42; also Dan. vi. 10, and ix. 3.) Allusion, however, may be made to the great Day of Atonement, when the High-priest, as the representative of the whole nation, carried the confessions and worship of the people with the blood of the sacrifices to the ark and its mercy-seat.

for he is holy] Rather, "Holy is He," as in *v.* 3. The response does not admit of the "for" of the A. V., which is not found in the Hebrew.

6. *they called*, &c.] Lit. "calling upon Jehovah, and He answers them." The sub-

7 He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance *that* he gave them.

8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.

9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God *is* holy.

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stitution in the A.V. of the past tense for the present conveys to the mind an entirely different idea from that which may have been in the mind of the Psalmist. These verses may contain either a description of the present worship of the redeemed Church, of which Moses, Aaron, and Samuel are the chosen representatives (see the introduction); or a predictive representation of the combined worship of the risen saints, and of those who shall be Christ's at His coming, in that great day of His appearing which the psalm describes. In the latter case the saints will all have become kings and priests unto God (Rev. v. 10); and Moses, who exercised priestly functions, as in the sprinkling of the blood (Ex. xxiv. 8), in the consecration of Aaron and his sons (Lev. viii. 6—13), and in the disposition of the furniture of the sanctuary (Ex. xl. 22—27), and Samuel, who is supposed to have discharged other functions than those assigned to the Levites (1 S. ii. 18, 19, and note in loc.), as well as Aaron, the High-priest, standing amongst, or pre-eminent amongst their brethren (see note on Ps. xciv. 8), may be considered as representing the Church in its priestly character. All these were mighty in prayer and intercession; Moses (cf. Exod. xvii. 11 sq., xxxii. 31, 32); Aaron (cf. Num. xvi. 48, when he stood between the living and the dead); Samuel (cf. 1 S. vii. 8, 9, and note in loc., xii. 18, and Jer. xv. 1, where Moses and Samuel are mentioned together): but whereas, in the cases of Moses and Aaron, the priestly functions seemed peculiarly to distinguish them, so, in the case of Samuel, the character of a man mighty in prayer is that which pre-eminently belongs to him. A comparison of these verses with Apoc. xi. 16—18 strongly confirms the view here taken that the reference is to the Theophany. It should be observed, moreover, that the "Song of Moses, the servant of God," is addressed to the "King of the *nations*," according to the best readings; and that the several clauses of the song need only to be compared with the several verses of this and the preceding psalm to bring out the striking correspondence between them. Thus, *e.g.*, we may compare the words (1) "Who shall not fear Thee and glorify Thy name?" with "Let them praise Thy great and terrible name" (xcix. 3): (2) "Thou only art holy," with "Holy is He," and "The Lord our God is holy" (xcix. 3, 5, 9): (3) "Thy judgments are made manifest," with xcviii. 9, xcix. 4, &c. It should be observed, however, that the word here rendered "priests" is used also to designate secular officers, or princes. See 2 S. viii. 18 compared with 1 Chro. xviii. 17; also 2 S. xx. 26; 2 K. x. 11; and Job xii. 19.

7. *He spake unto them*, &c.] Lit. **In a pillar of cloud He speaks unto them.** The Old Testament imagery is still preserved, as denoting the near access of the saints to God, and their admission into the same intimate communion with Him into which Moses was admitted of old; cf. Ezek. xxx. 3, where "the day of the Lord," which is also "the time of the heathen," or Gentiles, is described as a "day of cloud." When thus interpreted, there is no difficulty in the inclusion, not only of Aaron, but also of Samuel, amongst the number of those thus highly-favoured. When understood, on the other hand, as referring to the past history of Israel, the inclusion of Samuel creates a difficulty, unless, as is not unfrequently the case, the reference is restricted to the former clause of the verse. Even then, however, it must be remembered that the speaking to Aaron recorded in Num. xii. 5—8, when the Lord "came down in the pillar of the cloud," was in the form of rebuke. Moreover, Lev. xvi. 2 seems inconsistent with the supposition that God's will was ordinarily communicated to Aaron in the pillar of cloud. The cloud under the New, as under the Old, Testament dispensation is still the outward and visible sign and symbol of the divine presence, as on the Mount of Transfiguration (S. Luke ix. 34, 35), and of Ascension (Acts i. 9). It will be so also at the Second Advent, when He Who was received up into heaven in a cloud, "shall so come in like manner" as He went into heaven. (Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 17; Rev. i. 7; xiv. 14.)

they kept his testimonies, &c.] The tense is changed, and the reference is clearly to the past, just as in Rev. vii. 14, 15, "They *washed* their robes, and *made them white* in the blood of the Lamb: therefore *are* they before the throne of God, and *serve* Him day and night in His temple."

the ordinance that he gave them] The words may be rendered, "And He gave them a decree or a statute;" cf. Exod. xv. 25, "He made for them a statute," where the same word is used which is here rendered "ordinance."

8. *thou wast a God that forgavest them*, &c.] Rather, "Thou wast a forgiving God to them, and (*i.e.* and yet) taking vengeance upon their inventions (or doings)." God punished Moses and Aaron with exclusion from the land of promise, though He par-

doned their sins. On more than one occasion His anger was kindled against Aaron (see Ex. xxxii. 7—10, and Num. xii. 9). The interpretation of Kimchi, who refers the vengeance to that which was executed against Korah, Dathan and Abiram for their doings against Moses, is inadmissible. It is quite possible, however, that the reference may be generally to the sins of the people.

9. *at his holy hill*] Rather, "towards;" see on *v.* 5; cf. Apoc. xiv. 1.

NOTE on Psalm xcix. 4.

Some translate, "And they shall praise the strength of a king who loves judgment," the verb being supplied from *v.* 3. The intervention, however, of the response which concludes that verse seems fatal to this interpretation. Another possible rendering is, "And strength (belongs to) a king who loves judgment." Others translate as the A.V., following the LXX. and Vulg.; but this rendering is open to the obvious objection that it is the king himself, and not his strength, which should be the nominative case to the verb, as in Ps. xi. 7. Moreover, the rhythmical structure of the verse appears to be broken by all of these renderings. The pronoun is emphatic in both clauses, and the pronoun with the verb following seem in both clauses to follow, not to precede, the object. The only objection to which the rendering suggested in the footnote seems justly open is the neglect of the accentuation. Cf. 2 S. vii. 13, and Ps. ix. 7, where the throne of the king, and that of Jehovah, are said to be established (the verb is the same, כון), in the same manner as the king's strength is here said to be established.

PSALM C.

1 *An exhortation to praise God cheerfully,* 3 *for his greatness,* 4 *and for his power.*

A Psalm of [1]praise.

[1] Or, *thanksgiving.*

MAKE a joyful noise unto the LORD, [†]all ye lands.
2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

[†] Heb. *all the earth.*

Psalm C.

The inscription, "A Psalm of praise," or "thanksgiving," marg., describes the purpose of the psalm, which was not improbably written for a festive procession to the temple; see *v.* 4, and Ps. cxviii. 19. It nearly resembles the early part of Ps. xcv. (of which the use doubtless was the same), and is closely connected with the preceding series of pss., of which it forms the fitting conclusion. The words of *v.* 5, "For the Lord is good," &c., frequently occur in the later psalms, cvi. 1, cvii. 1, cxviii. 1, cxxxvi. 1, &c.; and would seem to have been used commonly as the burden of psalms of praise about and after the Captivity. See Jer. xxxiii. 11; Ezra iii. 11; 1 Macc. iv. 24. In 1 Chro. xvi. 34 they are inserted in the psalm of thanksgiving which David put into the hand of Asaph and his brethren (so the A. V.), or rather the psalm used in subsequent times on occasions similar to that of the settlement of the ark on Zion. They also occur, 2 Chro. v. 13, in the hymn sung at the Dedication of the Temple. The Chaldee paraphrast describes the psalm as used upon the occasion of a sacrifice of thanksgiving. See Lev. vii. 12, also 2 Chro. xxix. 31; Pss. cvii. 22, cxvi. 17. Possibly the inscription may convey this import; but the contents rather suit the notion above given. In the Syriac Version the psalm is entitled "A psalm for the conversion of the heathen to the true faith."

The first verse is a summary of what follows. It calls upon the whole earth (as Pss. lxvi. 1, xcvi. 1, xcviii. 4, &c.) to rejoice and be glad before Jehovah, on account of His mercy exhibited to His chosen; and upon His chosen, to serve and worship Him in His sanctuary, and rejoice before Him, as created by Him in a peculiar sense and selected from all peoples as His own. It would be straining the import of the psalm to call it Messianic. But as we hear it read daily, and call to mind the numberless Christian hymns founded upon it and sung daily by all denominations of Christians, we may surely consider it in a real sense prophetical. The psalm, Delitzsch says, is *Jehovisch:* it foretells the future universal reign of Jehovah: it instructs all peoples, that they have an interest in Jehovah's sovereignty, and in His choice for His own of a peculiar people.

1. *Make a joyful noise,* &c.] See Ps. xcviii. 4, where the same words occur: also Ps. lxvi. 1, where Elohim is put for Jehovah. The address is to the whole earth (see the marg.), all people, and all living things; see Gen. ix. 15, &c. It is unnatural to suppose the persons addressed in the next verse different; and that, after calling upon all living things to rejoice before God, the Psalmist abruptly passes in *v.* 2 to His peculiar people. It is however possible that, in *v.* 4, a smaller audience is addressed; the worshippers present at the ceremony of the day may be called upon to enter the courts of Jehovah with thoughts suitable to His service, and to praise Him for His doings to all and to themselves.

2. *come before his presence*] These words, if they do not necessarily presuppose the manifestation of the divine glory between the cherubim which overshadowed the mercy-

3 Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, [1] and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.

5 For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* † to all generations.

[1] Or, *and his we* are.

† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

seat, are, at least, best explained on the supposition of its existence: a supposition which, if correct, affords a clue to the time of composition of this series of psalms, and restricts it to the period preceding the Captivity. See the Excursus upon Pss. xci.—c.

3. *Know ye*, &c.] As Theodoret explains, "Know ye, all people, by infallible proofs, which He has exhibited to us, that He is God (Elohim) alone. It is He that *made*, that is, chose us out of all peoples and made us His own (Pss. xcv. 6, cxlix. 2; Deut. xxxii. 6, 15; Isai. xxix. 23, lx. 21), not we who made or chose ourselves (to be) His people and the sheep of His pasture."

The expression "*not we* (who made) *ourselves*" seems harsh; also pointless in this connection. The marginal reading, which is also the marginal reading of the Hebrew, "He made us, and His we are," gives a more pregnant sense. See Note at end. It is further noticeable that this verse is an imitation of Ps. xcv. 7, in which there is no idea such as the received version expresses.

The 'Midrash' (see Delitzsch) interprets the verse as containing a forcible antithesis to the words attributed to Pharaoh, Ezek. xxix. 3, "My river is mine own and I made myself;" but it is doubtful if the place should not rather be rendered (as in A.V.), "My river is mine own and I made (it) for myself;" a rendering which suits the sentiment of *v.* 9 of the same chapter: also the turn of expression, in the two places supposed to be antithetic one to the other, is different.

Kay observes that Pss. xciii. and c. are full of parallelisms to Isai. xl....lxvi.; and the marginal reading is supported by the analogy of Isai. xliii. 1. If the received text be retained, the verse should perhaps be rendered, "it is He that made us; and we were not." (Sym., Rashi.)

5. *For the* LORD *is good*, &c.] A sentiment applicable to the peculiar people first, and next, to all people. "Jehovah is merciful: His mercy is everlasting: His truth, in performance of His promises long since made (Gen. xxii. 15, &c.), remains from generation to generation." If the Psalmist in *v.* 4 addressed a peculiar audience, in this verse he returns to the far larger audience of *v.* 1, *i. e.* to all living things, to whom the promise was first made.

This psalm contains a promise of Christianity, as winter at its close contains the promise of spring. The trees are ready to bud, the flowers are just hidden by the light soil, the clouds are heavy with rain, the sun shines in his strength; only a genial wind from the south is wanted to give a new life to all things.

NOTE on PSALM C. 3.

Many Hebrew MSS., the Chaldee, Jerome, Saadia, &c., read וְלוֹ, which gives the marginal interpretation; and the two readings וְלוֹ and וְלֹא are so commonly interchanged (see Rosenm. note: the 'Masora' reckons fifteen places in which לֹא is written and לוֹ ought to be read), that we are at liberty to choose of the two readings that which gives the better sense.

PSALM CI.

David maketh a vow and profession of godliness.

A Psalm of David.

I WILL sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

PSALM CI.

This psalm throughout breathes the earnest, sincere, truth-loving, lofty spirit of David. It may have been written when he commenced his reign over the twelve tribes (2 S. v. 7—9), and first occupied the city of David. The Psalmist speaks as a king, *v.* 1, &c., and markedly, *v.* 8, as the theocratic king. He proclaims his principles of living and governing; to walk uprightly with Jehovah, *vv.* 1, 2; to essay no evil thing; to banish from his presence all wicked doers, evil speakers, proud ones, slanderers, deceivers, liars, *vv.* 4, 5, 7: to search out faithful men to dwell with him and serve him, *v.* 6, and to strive with his uttermost might to expel all the wicked from the land, and from Jehovah's city, *v.* 8. The psalm is one of a very few (see Pss. cxxvii., cxxviii.) in which the duties of daily life are described, and their due performance referred to Jehovah. There appears to be frequent allusion to this psalm in the Book of Proverbs (xi. 20, xxi. 4): the tone of it and of Proverbs, in fact, is not dissimilar. See notes on Ps. xv.; in which psalm David states the conditions of acceptance with Je-

2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

3 I will set no [†]wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; *it* shall not cleave to me.

4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked *person*.

5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

6 Mine eyes *shall be* upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh [‖] in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies [†]shall not tarry in my sight.

8 I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

‖ Or, *perfect in the way.*

† Heb. *shall not be established.*

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hovah: here, his purpose to enforce the same as king.

1. *I will sing*, &c.] "My theme," says the king, "is mercy and justice; addressed to Jehovah Whose Spirit inspires, and of Whom alone is strength to sing and to do." Hengstenberg objects that the theme is not mercy and justice, which are the attributes of God, but integrity and a good purpose, which are distinctions of man: but the objection seems an over-refinement. The attributes are God's, but they may be imitated at a distance by man (Micah vi. 8; Matt. xxiii. 23), and are the foundation of practical virtue.

unto thee, O LORD, will I sing] Or, "play upon the harp," or "instrument of music."

2. *I will behave myself*, &c.] Or, "I will give heed to a perfect way," &c. I will conduct myself wisely and uprightly, in the path of innocence: O when wilt Thou come to me, and aid me? The latter clause is illustrated by Exod. xx. 24. David, while he declares his purpose of living wisely in a perfect way, recollects many a sin and many a failure; so asks, or rather wishes, for Jehovah's aid, to live according to his purpose. The original words, which the A. V. renders with the interrogation, "O when wilt Thou come unto me?" are represented by many without the interrogation, in which case the sense is the same, but the expression less pointed. "When Thou shalt come unto me (see Joh. xiv. 23) and assist me, I will walk wisely in a perfect way." Tholuck renders the words thus, and imagines that they refer to David's fearful wish (2 S. vi. 9), at the commencement of his reign, to bring the ark of God into the city of David: as if he said, "When Thou shalt come unto me and dwell with me and bless me (as Thou didst bless the house of Obed-edom), I will walk in a perfect way." But the more general import of the words, given above, suits the context better: the ark of God (*v.* 8) was probably on Mount Zion when the psalm was written: and it is scarcely allowable, without a distinct authority for such application, to interpret the expressions, "When Thou shalt come unto me," or, "When wilt Thou come unto me?" as referring to the coming of the ark to Zion.

3, 4. *I will set no wicked thing*, &c.] David, in dealing with such men as Doeg, Cush, &c., had large experience of slanderers, talebearers, and overweening flatterers, the pest of kings. "I will not allow any wicked thing (Heb. a thing of Belial, see Ps. xli. 8, note), worthless, useless, to stand before mine eyes (*i.e.* as a pattern for imitation, Ps. xviii. 22, or object of regard)." "I hate the work, or act, of those that turn aside from the right path; it shall not cleave to me, I shake it off as a poisonous adder," Deut. xiii. 17. "A froward, or false heart, ill-omened guest (Prov. xi. 20), shall be banished from my court and person." "I will not know (Pss. i. 6, xxxv. 11), I will not have any acquaintance or dealings with, man or thing malicious or evil."

8. *I will early*, &c.] "Day after day, **each morning** (see 2 S. xxiv. 11; Jer. xxi. 12; Ps. lxxiii. 14; Luke xxii. 66), without let or hindrance, I will pursue my endeavour; the clearance of my palace is only the beginning of my enterprise; I will drive out at last all evildoers from the land, but specially from the city in which Jehovah dwells," 2 S. vi. 10, 16, &c.

Olshausen, J., Hitzig, and others refer this princely song, full of originality and concentration of thought, to the age of the Maccabees. Ewald, De Wette, &c., on the other hand, consider that every word of it discovers the spirit and tone of David, his lofty purpose, and intense inspiration. "It is a short, unpremeditated outpouring," the former says, "of long-restrained, profoundest sentiment, in which no attempt is made to exhaust the subject, or to clothe it in artificial shape. The thought of the great heart in which it was conceived is simple, indivisible, complete in itself, one; and corresponding to the thought is its expression; it is a whole, to which nothing can be added, and from which no part could be taken without destruction of its spirit and life!" See also Dean Stanley's

PSALM CII.

1 *The prophet in his prayer maketh a grievous complaint.* 12 *He taketh comfort in the eternity and mercy of God.* 18 *The mercies of God are to be recorded.* 23 *He sustaineth his weakness by the unchangeableness of God.*

A Prayer [1]of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

[1] Or, *for*.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

2 Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day *when* I call answer me speedily.

3 For my days are consumed [1]like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.

[1] Or, (as some read) *into smoke.*

4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my [1]skin.

[1] Or *flesh.*

6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the désert.

7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop.

8 Mine enemies reproach me all

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remarks upon the psalm; 'Jew. Ch.' Vol. II. p. 89.

PSALM CII.

The inscription of this psalm is peculiar: it is "A Prayer of the afflicted, when he faints, and pours out his meditation (Ps. civ. 34) before the Lord." It appears to be a direction for the use of the psalm by all persons afflicted, as the Psalmist was, in spirit or circumstances. The psalm itself (see *vv.* 14—18) was probably written during the Captivity: possibly when it had lasted long, and when the time prefigured in prophecy was almost expiring. The word rendered *set time* in *v.* 13 seems used (Ps. lxxv. 2; Hab. ii. 3; Dan. viii. 19) for the appointed time, *i. e.* of return.

Slight resemblances are noticed between this psalm and Jeremiah; it may have been written by Daniel, whose ninth chapter resembles it closely in tone and spirit.

Far from the land of his affections, in the midst of his foes, in desolation and misery, the prophet complains, *vv.* 1—11. But deliverance is nigh: Zion will be rebuilt, and all the earth adore Him that doeth such wonders, *vv.* 12—22. The Psalmist himself, worn out with sorrow, may not see the day (*vv.* 23—28), but Jehovah, Whose days are for ever, will see it: and the children of His servants will dwell before Him, and praise His name for ever.

The intensity of passionate sorrow in this complaint betrays the individual sufferer. But his sorrow is not only on account of his own ruined hopes: it is also on account of the ruin of his nation; raised up once by God to the highest eminence, and cast down now for sin to the lowest abyss. The latter ingredient of the bitter cup of sorrow (*i. e.* sorrow for the nation's desolation), in many parts of the psalm, overcomes the individual sentiment (*vv.* 13, 14, 16, 28).

1, 2. *Hear my prayer*, &c.] See Pss. xviii. 6, xxvii. 7, xxxix. 12, lxix. 17, &c. The commencement of the psalm, see Delitzsch, is made up of stereotyped phrases of entreaty, employed as common possessions, adequately to express thoughts springing up in a heart moved to its depths by urgent need.

3, 4, 5. *my days are consumed*, &c.] Marg. "into smoke," which seems to express the import of the ordinary reading. "Consumed into smoke," *i. e.* melt away, are mingled (so to say) with smoke, and disappear with it into nothing (Ps. xxxvii. 20; see also Ps. lxviii. 2). Many MSS., LXX., Vulg., &c. read "as smoke," or, "like smoke." The Psalmist's *bones*, the support and solid foundation of his body (Prov. xvii. 22) are burnt up as an hearth (upon which fire is ever smouldering), or as a firebrand (P. B. V.) consuming in the flame. His *heart* is sun-smitten (Ps. cxxi. 6; Hos. ix. 16) and withers; he forgets to eat bread (Job xxxiii. 20; 1 S. i. 7, xx. 34, &c.); his body, through sorrow and loud complaining, is nought but skin and bones (Job xix. 20; Lam. iv. 8).

6, 7. *I am like*, &c.] He is like a pelican alone in a wilderness; like an owl hooting alone in desolate ruins; like a sparrow that mourns without its partner upon the housetop.

The rendering "pelican" is from the LXX. The Hebrew word in the text is rendered "cormorant" in the A. V. Isai. xxxiv. 11; Zeph. ii. 14, &c. It is a bird that lives in swamps (Lev. xi. 18, where see note). In Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 260, ed. 1864, a pelican is described frequenting the solitudes of Lake Huleh, in Upper Syria. The rendering "owl" is also from the LXX., who interpret "an owl in the midst of ruins," as above. Since the "pelican" and "owl" are specified, it is natural to suppose that a "sparrow," or some specific solitary bird, is mentioned in *v.* 7 by the word which the LXX. render "sparrow." Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 43, says, "when one of these has lost its mate he will sit upon the housetop alone, and lament by the hour his sad bereavement."

the day; *and* they that are mad against me are sworn against me.

9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping,

10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

11 [a]My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.

12 But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

13 Thou shalt arise, *and* have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

15 So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

16 When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

18 This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people

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8. *they that*, &c.] Rather, "they that are mad against me **swear by me**," or use my name as a curse, saying, "Let him be as he is, whom Jehovah has cast down." Isai. lxv. 15; Jer. xxix. 22, xlii. 18.

9. *I have eaten*, &c.] To sit among the ashes, or to strew the head and dress with ashes, are well-known expressions of the deepest affliction; Job ii. 8. To *eat* ashes instead of bread, whilst grovelling in the dust (quia qui humi prostrati jacent quasi terram lingunt, says Calvin), would seem a still more forcible expression of hopeless sorrow, Lam. iii. 16: see also Isai. lxv. 25; Ps. lxxii. 9; Gen. iii. 14.

and mingled, &c.] A metaphor somewhat similar to the last; see Pss. xlii. 3, lxxx. 5. "Tears," in these two places, are the meat and bread of the Psalmist; in the place before us they are mingled with his drink.

10. *Because of thine*, &c.] The original words express the ideas "wrath" and "indignation" as strongly (says Delitzsch) as these can be expressed. The bitterest ingredient of our cup of sorrow is, to know that it is owing to Jehovah's wrath and fierce anger for sin.

thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down] Rather, "cast me away." The idea of lifting up, with a view to throwing down with the greater force, is strained. The metaphor is probably from a wind (Job xxvii. 21, xxx. 22), which lifts up and casts away. See Isai. xxii. 17. It describes the condition of God's people, plucked by His hand out of the home of promise, and cast far away into exile: where their days (see Ps. xc. 9), in mid course (*v.* 24), decline and vanish away as a shadow that lengthens (Jer. vi. 4) and disappears in the gloom (Ps. cix. 23): or as a plant plucked up by the roots, dried up instantly, and destroyed.

12, 13, 14. *But thou*, &c.] The import is, "But Thou, O Lord, dost endure," or rather, "dost sit upon Thy throne and reign (see Ps. ix. 7, xxix. 10; Lam. v. 19) for ever; and Thy name, or memorial, a surety of mercy and faithfulness (see Exod. iii. 15), and Thy promise (see Exod. xxv. 8), are for evermore. The time (see Jer. xxv. 11, 12, xxix. 10; Dan. ix. 2) has come that Thou shouldest shew mercy, and 'tis needed: Thy servants love, far above the palaces in the midst of which they dwell, the city wasted and ruinous in which God dwelt: and shed bitter tears of sorrow when they think of her in the dust." (See Neh. iv. 2; Lam. iv. 1.)

favour the dust thereof, &c.] The P. B. V. has "it pitieth them to see her in the dust." The literal meaning seems to be, "groan over," "view with sorrow." See Prov. xiv. 21.

15. *So the heathen*, &c.] And by His restoration of Zion, Jehovah will extend His kingdom: and all peoples and kings will recognize His name, and worship Him with fear and trembling: cf. Isai. lix. 19.

16, 17, 18. *When the LORD*, &c.] The import is, "When Jehovah shall rebuild Jerusalem, and appear in His glory (Isai. xl. 3—5): when He shall regard the poor desolate ones, and despise not their prayer; His deeds of mercy shall be written, as His former deeds of mercy are, amongst us, written, not spoken only (Exod xvii. 14; Deut. xxxi. 19), for the edification of generations to come: and a people to be born, a new people in place of that which is dead and cast away, shall be created afresh (Isai. lix. 19, lx. 2, 3), and praise Him: because He looked down from His lofty sanctuary to earth, heard the groanings of the prisoners, loosed those that were doomed to death:—to declare His name and praise in Jerusalem, when peoples are gathered together," &c. Note the persuasions addressed by this prophet to Jehovah listening to, and heeding him, as a man!—the deep need of His interference (*vv.* 13, 14), the furtherance of His kingdom (*v.* 15), and of His name

which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose [†]those that are appointed to death;

† Heb. *the children of death.*

21 To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

23 He [†]weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.

† Heb. *afflicted.*

24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years *are* throughout all generations.

25 [b]Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

b Heb. 1. 10.

26 They shall perish, but thou shalt [†]endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

† Heb. *stand.*

27 But thou *art* the same, and thy years shall have no end.

28 The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

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and fame (*v.* 18, 21) as a God of deliverances. The literal rendering of the Hebrew in *vv.* 16—18, &c. describes the vision as accomplished; and adds circumstances (*vv.* 21, 22), *i. e.* the proclamation of the name of Jehovah in Zion, and congregation of princes and people to serve Him, which at the time of the utterance of the word must have seemed incredible and impossible; but soon were in fact realized.

In *v.* 20 the P. B. V. renders "deliver the children appointed to death." The original words, expressed in the margin "children of death," are a well-known Hebraism for that which the A. V. expresses. Cf. with *vv.* 19—21, Isai. xlii. 7, lxi. 1, lxiii. 15. Other resemblances, besides those specially noticed, between the psalm and the latter chapters of Isaiah, could be added.

23. *He weakened my strength*, &c.] *i.e.* "He weakened (marg. afflicted) my strength in my journey of life, and shortened my days: I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my brief days, before I see Thy manifestation in glory: Thy years endure through all generations; from the beginning, ere yet the heaven and the earth existed, to the end, when they shall wear out as a garment: and Thy promise to us, and to our fathers, is certain; if it be not accomplished now and to us, it will surely be accomplished to our children; and their seed will abide, and stand before Thee for ever." Cf. Ps. xc. 16. The A.V. "my strength" is from the marginal reading of the Hebrew Bible. The received reading, "He weakened or wasted His strength," admits no easy interpretation. Life is likened to a line of a definite length; see Ps. lv. 23. The Psalmist, *v.* 24, appeals to God by His own infinite existence, entreating Him not to snatch him (the Psalmist) away ere the half of his short length, or course, be run: then, resting for a moment (*vv.* 25—27) upon the sublime topic of God's eternity, draws from it an assurance that one day surely, if not in the Psalmist's day, His everlasting promise will be accomplished.

26, 27. *They* (*i.e.* heaven and earth) *shall perish. Thou art the same*] Literally, "Thou art He," as in Isai. xli. 4, xlvi. 4. See too xxxiv. 4, l. 9, li. 6, lxv. 9, 17, lxvi. 22, of which some expressions are recited. The idea is that God is the same and unchangeable. Heaven and earth, and the elements, are described as eternal (Ps. lxxii. 5, cxlviii. 6, &c.), but contrasted with God, here, as transitory and passing: in other places, as by Him liable to change or destruction; Isai. xxxiv. 4, lxv. 17, &c.

28. *shall continue*] Or, "shall dwell before Thee in a home" (see Pss. xxxvii. 29, lxviii. 16, 18). The wishes and expectations (*vv.* 16, 17, &c.) of this psalm are fulfilled in their obvious sense by the restoration of the people, and re-appearance of Jehovah in Zion. But there is a deeper foresight in the psalm; and its words in the verses quoted are fulfilled in a sense yet higher by Christ's appearance. This is the vision which floats in dim obscurity, but really and substantially, before the Psalmist. Jehovah, so we may say, stepped from behind the thin veil which scarcely concealed Him from this prophet, and appeared in the flesh. A narrative of His deeds (*v.* 18) has been written for us who come after: a people unborn and created anew by His Spirit praises Him in psalms and hymns everywhere; because He heard the groaning of the prisoners; loosed those that were appointed to death; and to Him are the peoples gathered. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. i. 10, 11, 12), on account of this secret purpose of the psalm, quotes *vv.* 25—27 as simply addressed to Christ. Even His coming in the

PSALM CIII.

1 *An exhortation to bless God for his mercy,* 15 *and for the constancy thereof.*

A Psalm of David.

BLESS the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things; so that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

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flesh does not exhaust the applicability of the psalm to Him. The gathering to Him of kingdoms and peoples is only, as yet, partially accomplished: and we of this day wait (says Delitzsch), as the Psalmist for His coming in the flesh, for His final appearance in glory. Hengstenberg conceives the psalm to be written by David, and to be wholly prophetical. This theory destroys its spirit. Ewald, on account chiefly of the historic descriptive words (*vv.* 14, 15), conceives it written early after the return from exile. Olshausen, J. and others relegate the inimitable psalm to the days of the Maccabees. The hypothesis adopted, that it was written towards the close of the captivity, is that of able expositors (Delitzsch, Hupfeld, Tholuck, Calvin, &c.), seems to correspond best with its purport, and gives it a meaning which any other quoted hypothesis fails to impart.

PSALM CIII.

A psalm commemorating Jehovah's manifold mercies; but chiefly His compassion in forgiving sin, and bearing with His people's weakness (*vv.* 1—18): also His infinite majesty, throned in heaven (*v.* 19), which His angels and all creation, and the Psalmist himself specially, should adore (*vv.* 20, 21).

The inscription assigns the psalm to David. The Syriac Ver. describes it as written by him in old age: after experience of sin and its chastisement, and of God's infinite lovingkindness. Certain Aramaic terminations, *vv.* 3, 4, &c., seem to indicate a later author. By whomsoever composed, it breathes a spirit of faith and hope all but evangelical, and is composed with a pathos that evidences a soul tried by real sin, sorrow, and suffering, and rescued by God's mercy. It should be compared with Psalm xxiii.

1. *all that is within me*, &c.] The Psalmist calls upon his soul to bless God: and for greater distinctness, upon its parts, upon intellect, feeling, sentiment; upon his understanding, heart, and all their powers, to unite in the work of praise.

2. *all his benefits*] *i.e.* the sum, which is infinitely great, of His benefits.

3. *Who forgiveth*, &c.] "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities," so that not one is unforgiven; and "healeth all thy diseases," so that not a trace remains of one.

Sickness of body (and so of mind) is so naturally connected with sin as its meed, that we are not surprised to find them connected in Scripture (see Ps. cvii. 20, &c.). The next verse (4) continues the idea of a deliverance, through God's miraculous interference, from sickness and death: "Who redeems thee from death and the grave, and instead of these gives life and a crown of mercy." Many commentators (Calvin, Hupfeld, &c.) object to the confinement of the words *healeth all thy diseases* to bodily ailments and their cure; and interpret them as extending to the healing of all ailments of body, mind, and spirit, by divine grace. But this extension of the meaning of the words seems to take away their point. It can scarcely be doubted that they refer to particular instances of God's healing power exhibited in the case of David himself, or of the Psalmist who sings.

5. *thy mouth*] The word here rendered "mouth" is of doubtful meaning. In Ps. xxxii. 9 the same word, with suffix different, is interpreted by the LXX. as "his jaws," and by the old Jewish commentators "his jaw," or "his mouth;" whence probably Kimchi, and our A. V., render here as above. The Chaldee Version interprets "thy day of age," a translation for which some authority may be alleged [supposing the word to come from the Hebrew root (עד) signifying duration]: it has the advantage also that it makes the two parts of the verse in some sort to correspond: "Who satisfies thine age with good: so that thy youth is renewed like an eagle." If David wrote this psalm in old age the verse in this rendering would have a special significance. The longings of a declining age can only be satisfied by faith in God, the Giver of hope better than the natural life.

so that thy youth, &c.] Is the meaning "Thy youth is renewed, and is in strength like an eagle"? or, "Thy youth is renewed as the eagle renews its youth (so to say) by donning a new plumage"? The eagle is often an image of strength and speed (Deut. xxviii. 49; Isai. xl. 31; Hos. viii. 1), and it seems natural that youthful strength renewed by divine gift should be compared to an eagle's strength. The P. B. V. renders according to this interpretation, "making thee young and lusty as an eagle." The renewal of youth by the

6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 [a] The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and † plenteous in mercy.

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For † as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

15 *As for* man, his days *are* as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and † it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

18 [b] To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

[a] Exod. 34. 6, 7. Numb. 14. 18. Deut. 5. 10. Neh. 9. 17. Ps. 86. 15. Jer. 32. 18.
† Heb. *great of mercy.*
† Heb. *according to the height of the heaven.*
† Heb. *it is not.*
[b] Deut. 7. 9.

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moulting of plumage is not peculiar to the eagle tribe: the image does not seem to be scriptural, and is perhaps too far removed from common observation to be introduced without explanation into this solemn hymn.

6. *The LORD*, &c.] The Psalmist passes from his own experience to that of his people. Cf. Pss. cii. 20, 21, cxlvii. 6, &c.

7. *He made known*, &c.] Generally, by His revelation of Himself as described in Scripture: specially as described in Exod. xxxiii. 19 and xxxiv. 6. *His ways* are the ways in which He Himself walks (Pss. xxv. 4, lxvii. 2, lxxvii. 19). *His acts* are His deeds of righteousness, deliverance, and sustentation (Pss. ix. 12, lxxviii. 11; Exod. xxxiv. 10. See Joh. v. 17).

8. *The LORD*, &c.] Exod. xxxiv. 6, the text, so to say, of this psalm: see also Pss. lxxxvi. 5, 15, cxi. 4, cxii. 4, cxlv. 8. These places describe God's attributes displayed in His dealings with His people; but also, we may be assured, His ineffable essence in which mercy predominates.

9. *He will not*, &c.] The place, Exod. xxxiv. 6, is often quoted by Moses himself (Exod. xxxiv. 9; Num. xiv. 18) in explanation and mitigation, so to say, of the rigid sentence of Exod. xx. 5, 6; and after Moses, by the prophets in all ages; Isai. lvii. 16; Jer. iii. 5, 12; Joel ii. 13; Jonah iv. 2; 2 Chro. xxx. 9; Neh. ix. 17.

11. *For as the heaven*, &c.] The vastness of the infinite heavens above the earth is an image of God's infinite mercy, which He shews to all that fear Him: the distance which separates east and west images the distance to which He has removed our sin away, if we are His. As a father pities his son whom he loves and knows, so God pities us, knowing that we are but dust (Gen. ii. 7). God is described in Deut. xxxii. 6; Job x. 8; Isai. xxix. 16, lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8, &c., as the Father of His people: but here the relation is expressed in still more tender phrase: see Matt. vii. 7, &c. The life and death of God manifest in the flesh are the best comment upon these signal words of prophecy.

15, 16. *As for man*, &c.] Similar images Ps. xc. 5; Isai. xl. 6; Job xiv. 2, &c. The original word used for *man* expresses his weakness and littleness.

the wind passeth, &c.] The east wind (Jer. iv. 11, 12) changes in a moment a garden into a waste.

the place, &c.] See Job vii. 10 (where the very words of the second versicle of *v.* 16 occur), viii. 18, xx. 9. The place in which it grew is as if it had never been there; has no recollection of the day when it grew there and flourished. As the flower that was and is not, so is man's estate and hope. But God's mercy encompasses those that love Him as the heavens encompass the earth. His justice, that is, His faithfulness to promise, reaches to a thousand generations of those that remember His commandments to do them. See Exod. xx. 6; Deut. vii. 9; Isai. xl. 8. Perowne remarks that the *condition* of God's lovingkindness is thrice repeated (*vv.* 11, 13, 17): it is for them that fear Him.

Such is God's mercy: the incomparable majesty of Him Who thus condescends is lastly described. Cf. Ps. xciii. 1, 2, 3, &c.

20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, [t] that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

21 Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* his hosts; *ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

PSALM CIV.

1 *A meditation upon the mighty power,* 7 *and wonderful providence of God.* 31 *God's glory is eternal.* 33 *The prophet voweth perpetually to praise God.*

BLESS the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest *thyself* with light as *with* a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

4 [a] Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

[t] ...y in ...th. [a] Hebr. 1. 7

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20. *Bless the LORD*, &c.] See Ps. xxix. 1, cxlviii. 2. The angels (or archangels) close to God's throne, excelling in might (marg. mighty in strength, Isai. xiii. 3, xl. 26; Joel iii. 9, 11; Rev. x. 1), executing His behests, and listening to catch any intimation of His pleasure, are first addressed: next the unnumbered hosts of ministering spirits (see Luke ii. 13; Ps. civ. 4) that do His will: next, all His works (Ps. cxlviii.), in all parts of His infinite dominion: and last of all the Psalmist himself, least and least worthy of all, after a commemoration of Jehovah's perfections, mercy, long-suffering, tenderness and ineffable majesty, stirs up his own spirit to join the chorus of universal praise.

PSALM CIV.

A noble nature-psalm, which is discriminated from classic or heathen nature-songs by this, that God in it is all in all. Everything is created by Him: everything lives by and through Him. In the beginning He founded the earth and adapted it to life, out of a watery chaos (*vv.* 5—9). He furnished it with all things needful, for wild beast in desolate waste, for cattle, and for man, who is supplied with all things for need and enjoyment (*vv.* 10—15). He nourishes inanimate plants, and trees, in the topmost summits of which nestle innumerable birds (*vv.* 16—18). He created the sun and the moon for man (*v.* 19). He filled the sea with innumerable creatures; and leviathan there sports before Him (*vv.* 25—30). His care extends through *eternity*, and moves the soul of the Psalmist to glad songs of praise, and of hope for those who love Him. The creation of the world, and its description in Gen. i., throughout are present to the memory of the Psalmist as he sings: and some marked features of it are poetically touched; original chaos (*vv.* 5, 6); the creation of sun and moon (*v.* 19); of the sea and its tenants (*vv.* 25, 26, &c.).

1. *thou art clothed*, &c.] Literally, "Thou hast put on glory and majesty," *i.e.* "In creating out of nothing, or chaos, this outward form of glorious nature, *Thou hast put on* a faint, and real, but the only imaginable, palpable, image of a concealed ineffable glory." Cf. Ps. xciii. 1.

2. *Who coverest thyself*, &c.] The intense glory of the invisible God is concealed by *light*, the garment in which He is arrayed. He stretches out the canopy of Heaven, as a man stretches out the curtain of a tent (Cant. i. 5; Isai. xl. 22, xlii. 5, xliv. 24, liv. 2). He constructs His pavilion, in which to abide secretly, in the watery firmament above the clouds (Ps. cxlviii. 4; Amos ix. 6), as a man builds an upper chamber (Jer. xxii. 13) with joists and rafters. Like a king He rides forth thence upon His chariot the clouds (Isai. xix. 1; Dan. vii. 13), and sends His messengers (Ps. cxlviii. 8), winds, and a flame of fire, to execute His commands.

In the Hebrew, the words rendered *coverest thyself*, *stretchest out*, &c. express the original act of creation, and also the perpetual maintaining power of God. If the creative power for an instant ceased to act, all would collapse into ancient chaos.

4. *Who maketh his angels*, &c.] The literal meaning is, "Who maketh His messengers winds," &c. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 7) cites the LXX. version of this passage, and draws an argument which does not seem warranted by the words in their first import, as if the angels of God were pointedly mentioned in it. Such argument, though not conveyed by the words in their literal meaning, may yet be regarded as naturally following from them, and lying, so to say, only just below the surface of them. As God Himself, in a sense (*vv.* 1, 2), clothes His ineffable glory in the outward garment of light and of the visible creation, so His angels, at His command, may put on the outward form of nature's elements, and execute His bidding, as fire and flame, storm and tempest. This explanation seems simpler than that of Calvin, for instance, who says,

5 † *Who* laid the foundations of the earth, *that* it should not be removed for ever.

† Heb. *He hath founded the earth upon her bases.*

6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as *with* a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

8 ‖ They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

‖ Or, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend.*

9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

10 † He sendeth the springs into the valleys, *which* † run among the hills.

† Heb. *Who sendeth.*

† Heb. *walk.*

11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses † quench their thirst.

† Heb. *break.*

12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* † sing among the branches.

† Heb. *give a voice.*

13 He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;

15 And *b* wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man, *and* † oil to make

b Judg. 9. 13.

† Heb. to make his face shine with oil, or, more than oil.

"It was not the Apostle's purpose in this passage (Heb. i. 5) to expound the meaning of the Psalmist, but rather to express a truth naturally flowing from it, and in some sort implied in it. As God in His infinite wisdom employs the agency of clouds and of a fiery flame to execute His commands, and sends them hither and thither as He pleases, to do His bidding; so He uses, though secretly and covertly, the spiritual ministry of angels, those far subtler and finer essences, to minister to His world of spirits."

5, 6, 7, 8. *Who laid the foundations*, &c.] The marg. rendering is more literal. He laid the foundation of the earth, and fixed it firmly upon nothing (Job xxvi. 7). The great deep covered its solid nucleus, and rose above the tops of the primeval mountains (Ps. xc. 2; Gen. xlix. 26). A word from Him, a voice of His threatening thunder, and they fly terrified away—rise impetuously to their original rest above the tops of the mountains, then fall down deep into the lowest valleys, till they find the beds appointed for them of God (Gen. i. 9). The words of the psalm put the original wondrous process graphically before the eye. The change of tense, too, from past to present, in *vv.* 6, 7, 8. is expressive, and paints the scene in its progress. In *v.* 6 *stood* should be **stand**: in *v.* 7 *fled* should be **flee**: and *hasted away* should be **haste away**, as in the P. B. V.

According to the marginal rendering (*v.* 8) the effect of the waters (*v.* 7) passing, at the voice of God, from their original site above the mountains into the places appointed for them, is described by its consequence; by the emergence of the primeval mountains and discovery of the valleys which existed in earth's original state, when mantled by the deep. On this supposition, the words in the margin, "the mountains ascend, the valleys descend," are in a parenthesis; and the latter part of *v.* 8 is connected with *v.* 7: "At Thy rebuke they flee, at the voice of Thy thunder they hasten away (the mountains ascend, the valleys descend) to the places which Thou hast founded for them!" It is hard to decide positively between this explanation and that given above.

9. *Thou hast set a bound*, &c.] Some ask, Does the Psalmist speak in forgetfulness of the great deluge? or must we consider that in this description of earth, its tenants, and earliest origin, he includes the deluge and the promise following it (Gen. viii. 21, 22. ix. 11, 15), that from that day forth God never would again destroy all living things? It seems a sufficient reply to say that the verse describes pointedly the *present* and *future*: it describes poetically, and exultingly, the permanence of nature, and the imprisonment of ocean, despite its strength and vastness, in its appointed bed. The thought of this occurs to all who look upon the sea, and notice its wonderful movements, so irresistible apparently, yet confined to such strict limits for ever (Job xxxviii. 11).

10, 11, 12. *He sendeth the springs*, &c.] He makes springs to gush out and flow (as rivers) among the secret valleys (LXX. ἐν φάραγξιν, "wadys"), and far away among the hills. The wild ass drinks of them unseen: the birds of the air sing, in the branches of the bordering trees, a song which God hears.

13. *He watereth the hills*, &c.] His plenteous rain supplies the mountain springs, and abundantly satisfies the earth. It is the fruit of *His works*, of His chambers in the clouds (*v.* 3), out of which He pours His treasures without stint.

14. *herb for the service of man*] *i.e.* for the *use* of man (see 1 Chro. xxvi. 30).

his face to shine, and bread *which* strengtheneth man's heart.

16 The trees of the LORD are full *of sap;* the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

17 Where the birds make their nests: *as for* the stork, the fir trees *are* her house.

18 The high hills *are* a refuge for the wild goats; *and* the rocks for the conies.

19 He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein †all the beasts of the forest do creep *forth*.

† Heb. *all the beasts thereof do trample on the forest.*

21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

24 O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

25 *So is* this great and wide sea, wherein *are* things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships: *there is* that leviathan, *whom* thou hast †made to play therein.

† Heb. *formed.*

27 [c] These wait all upon thee; that

[c] Ps. 145. 15.

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15. *And wine that maketh*, &c.] The literal rendering is, "Wine too maketh glad the heart of man, to make his face shine with (or, more than) oil: and bread strengthens man's heart." The meaning is, "Wine gladdens the heart of frail man; oil makes his face to shine through joy and cheerfulness: and bread strengthens his weary heart." The Psalmist passes from the general subject of provision for man and beast (*vv.* 10—14) to particularize man's comforts and luxuries. Bread, the staff of life, occurs under both categories; in *v.* 14, *that he may bring forth food* (Heb. bread) *out of the earth:* here, *v.* 15, *bread, which strengthens man's heart.* Corn, wine, and oil, are the glory of the promised land (Deut. xi. 14, xviii. 4, &c.). The last, probably, is mentioned here with corn and wine, as a product of the earth given by God for food, and thus helpful to man's pleasure and enjoyment. Oil was commonly mixed with various articles of food ('Dict. of Bible,' Art. *Oil*); is often mentioned as itself an article of food with corn and wine (Deut. xii. 17; Jer. xxxi. 12; 1 K. xvii. 12); and is so described by travellers at the present day in Palestine (Thomson's 'Land and Book,' p. 55). The head and body were commonly anointed with oil (Deut. xxviii. 40; Luke vii. 46; 2 S. xiv. 2; Ruth iii. 3, &c.); but this practice of anointing can scarcely be alluded to here, as the face (which does not seem to have been anointed) is specified.

16. *The trees of the LORD*, &c.] Literally, **The trees of Jehovah are satisfied**, or, **have their fill** (Keble). He satisfies with His abundant rain the world of plants and trees, the cedars of Lebanon (Ps. xxix. 5) which He planted (Num. xxiv. 6).

18. *conies*] See note on Lev. xi. 5.

19. *He appointed the moon*, &c.] He appointed the moon to mark seasons (Gen. i. 14; Lev. xxiii. 4, 5, 6, &c.; Ecclus. xliii. 7): the great sun, obedient to His command, defines day and night.

24. *riches*] The idea is "property," or "possession," derived from original creation: see Gen. xiv. 19. The singular instead of the plural occurs in many MSS., in the ancient versions, and many excellent editions.

25. *So is this great and wide sea*, &c.] "That great sea, too, is full of His creations: there go the ships, carrying man to earth's extremest border: there sports leviathan, a tiny creature before Him." Ships travelling on ocean are a noticeable feature in the scene of life and movement. Leviathan may be, here, the whale, the mightiest of sea-monsters. See 'Dict. Bible,' in v.

Some translate the word rendered "ships" by "nautilus," as an instance of a small creature contrasted with leviathan. Such niceties are out of place in this comprehensive sketch of God's world. In *v.* 26, some (Ewald in 1st ed., Hitzig, Kay, &c., after the LXX. and Vulg., perhaps) render, "Leviathan whom Thou hast made to sport with;" a comparison unsuited to this picture, in which God's creatures are painted as enjoying life before Him: also it would seem undignified, and unscriptural, for the passage in Job (xli. 5), which is supposed to support this interpretation, is not parallel; rather Job xl. 20. *Therein* refers to the sea, *v.* 25, as *wherein*, *v.* 20, to "the night:" so Saadia renders.

things creeping innumerable] More correctly, "a mass of moving things without number."

both small and great beasts] Heb. "living creatures, small with great."

thou mayest give *them* their meat in due season.

28 *That* thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

31 The glory of the LORD † shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.

† Heb. *shall be*.

32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

33 I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.

35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CV.

1 *An exhortation to praise God, and to seek out his works.* 7 *The story of God's providence over Abraham,* 16 *over Joseph,* 23 *over Jacob in Egypt,* 26 *over Moses delivering the Israelites,* 37 *over the Israelites brought out of Egypt, fed in the wilderness, and planted in Canaan.*

O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

[a] 1 Chron. 16. 8. Isai. 12. 4.

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31. *The glory of the LORD*, &c.] God views the manifold scene of His creation always, and rejoices in it always. His power, too, and ruling care, direct it always since first it came into existence. If He looks at the earth, it trembles to its foundations; if He touches it with His hand, the smoke ariseth.

Earthquakes and volcanoes are supposed here to be referred to God's direct agency; but volcanoes do not seem to be mentioned in any other scripture: the words "He toucheth or striketh the hills, and they smoke," refer rather to the lightning and its effects. See Pss. xviii. 8, cxliv. 5. In Amos ix. 5 we read, "He toucheth the earth, and it melts."

This psalm is appointed in our Church for Whit-Sunday. The creation of the material world in the beginning, its perpetual preservation, and the renewal of life through the breath of God, suggest naturally the Christian doctrine of a new creation of the spirit of man, and its perpetual maintenance by the Holy Spirit. If God withdraws His breath, all creatures (*v.* 29) return to dust: if He withdraws His quickening Spirit from the soul of a man, it dies to Him. If he imparts a new ray of divine illumination, it lives again; as the outward world, *v.* 30, is renewed day by day, and lives always through His life-giving word.

33, 34. *I will sing*, &c.] The import is, "I will sing unto Jehovah as long as I live: I will praise my God whilst I have being. Oh that my meditation may be pleasing to Him! My joy (emphatic) is from Him alone. As for sinners (the blot of this glorious scene), they shall perish at last from the earth, and God shall be all in all." It may be that the psalm is not simply a song of praise suggested by the contemplation of God in His works, but written (it could scarcely be written otherwise than) in the midst of trial and weariness of sinners—a soothing meditation upon God's manifested mercy. Such it has proved to multitudes of Christians; who see in it deeper mysteries than its author, perhaps, could discern in his early day. We are assured by St John (i. 3; see too 1 Cor. viii. 6; Heb. i. 2) that Christ took part in the work of creation. At the Transfiguration He clothed His ineffable brightness with light (*v.* 2) to symbolize His glory as God. He fed the multitudes, commanded the winds and waves, ruled the tenants of the deep, to suggest His divine power over creation; and by His Spirit, which He has poured abundantly on His followers, has cast a new light upon the whole psalm. The doctrines of the ministry of angels, of the gift of the Holy Spirit to Christians, have already been noticed, as lying only just below the surface of the psalm. The Redemption, through Christ, of sinners, and the ultimate conquest of sin and death, through His victory over both, after what has been said on the hidden purpose of the psalm, seem figured prophetically; at the least, desired ardently, and, perhaps, anticipated in the last verses of it.

PSALM CV.

A psalm nearly resembling Ps. lxxviii., and containing an epitome of God's dealings with His people, from the time of the promise to the occupation of Canaan. Its purpose is to stir up faith in Him to all time. The first fifteen verses begin the psalm recited in 1 Chro. xvi. 8—22, and placed, according to the A. V., in the hands of Asaph by David, upon the occasion of the installation of the Ark of God upon Mount Zion: see the introductions to Pss. xcvi., cvi. It is connected

2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.

3 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

4 Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.

5 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.

7 He *is* the LORD our God: his judgments *are* in all the earth.

8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations.

9 [b] Which *covenant* he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant:

11 [c] Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, [†] the lot of your inheritance:

[b] Gen. 17. 2. & 22. 16. & 26. 3. & 28. 13. & 35. 11. Luke 1. 73. Hebr. 6. 17.

[c] Gen. 13. 15. & 15. 18.

[†] Heb. *the cord.*

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with Pss. civ. and cvi. in various ways. They are all hallelujah psalms: Pss. civ. and cv. end with hallelujah; Ps. cvi. begins and ends with it. Other minute resemblances are noticed. Hengstenberg observes that Ps. civ. describes God's wonders in creation; Pss. cv. and cvi. in history. His hypothesis is, that all were written to console Israel during the captivity.

Verses 1—6 contain the introduction: *vv.* 7 15 the purpose of the psalm; the promise to Abraham and the patriarchs, and care of them when few and weak, and strangers in the land: *vv.* 16—23, the providences by which God carried them into Egypt; *vv.* 24—38, His dealings with them and with their enemies in Egypt: *vv.* 39—41, His miracles in the waste: *vv.* 42—45, the conclusion, in which His purpose in all these doings is again described. The miracle of the passing of the Red Sea is omitted; partly, it may be, on account of its perpetual mention, and partly because it does not belong strictly to any one of the divisions above enumerated.

1. *call upon his name*] Call upon Him with praise and prayer, Gen. iv. 26; by His name Jehovah, in which He revealed Himself, Exod. xxxiii. 19, xxxiv. 5.

make known his deeds] Pss. xcvi. 3, xcviii. 4, c. 1.

among the people] Or, *peoples:* for all are concerned. This verse occurs verbatim Isai. xii. 4.

4. *Seek the LORD*, &c.] Seek Him where His mighty strength abides: seek Him where His face is seen in glory, *i. e.* in His temple in which He dwells (Ps. lxiii. 2), and in which His face is seen of His worshippers. The ancient interpreters construe the word, in the A. V. rendered "His strength," as "His ark of strength" (see Pss. lxxviii. 61, cxxxii. 8; 2 Chro. vi. 41); in which case the sense is the same.

5. *judgments of his mouth*, &c.] The decrees which He uttered with His lips, touching His people and their foes, and issuing in events, Exod. vi. 6, vii. 4, xii. 12; Ps. cxix. 13; decrees, as of a king exercising authority, and dispensing law (*v.* 7), everywhere.

6. *O ye seed*, &c.] The reason for calling upon Jehovah; "ye are the seed of Abraham and Jacob." Instead of *Abraham* we read in the Book of Chronicles and some MSS. of the psalm *Israel.*

his chosen] *i. e.* Heirs of the promise, the theme of this song.

7. *He is the LORD our God*, &c.] The Psalmist commences the work of praise, to which he invited others in the introduction, *vv.* 1—6. The rendering, "He, Jehovah, is our God," is more accurate: His name has already been announced, *vv.* 1—3.

8. *He hath remembered*, &c.] He remembers, even though He seems to forget in captivity and desolation, the covenant which He made with Abraham; confirmed with an oath (Gen. xxii. 16); renewed to Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 3) and Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 13, xxxv. 12); and made for a thousand generations (Deut. vii. 9); to give to their posterity the inheritance of Canaan, *vv.* 11—42.

the word] *i. e.* the covenant by word conveyed (see *v.* 42), His holy promise, or word. In 1 Chro. xvi. 15, as also in some MSS. of the psalm, instead of "He hath remembered" is read the imperative "Remember," which interrupts the narrative of God's dealings with His people.

10. *for a law*] *i. e.* to have the permanence of perpetual law: see Gen. xvii. 7, 8.

11. *the lot*] Marg. "the cord," with which, as it were, the portion of inheritance is measured; see Mic. ii. 5; Gen. xiii. 17; Pss. xvi. 6, lxxviii. 55. The change of number, "thee," and then "your," is explained by the circumstance that the covenant was made in the first place with Abraham, afterwards with Isaac and Jacob.

12 When they were *but* a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.

13 When they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people;

14 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes;

15 *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

16 Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.

17 He sent a man before them, [d] *even* Joseph, *who* was sold for a servant:

18 [e] Whose feet they hurt with fetters: [†] he was laid in iron:

19 Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

[d] Gen. 37. 28.
[e] Gen. 39. 20.
[†] Heb. *his soul came into iron.*

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12. *When they were but a few*, &c.] In the original, "When they were men of number," as in Gen. xxxiv. 30, &c. This verse is connected with *vv.* 13—15, which follow, rather than with the verses preceding. It exhibits in fuller light the providence of God which guarded His people, when few in number and strangers, in the land one day to be theirs.

In 1 Chro. xvi. 19 we read, "when ye were but few," &c., a reading supported by some MSS. and by the Chald. and Syr. Versions. If it be adopted, this verse must be attached to *v.* 11, and not to *vv.* 13, 14, &c.

strangers] See Gen. xv. 7, &c.

13. *When they went*, &c.] The wandering life of the patriarchs is described. See Gen. xii. 1, 9, xiii. 18, xx. 1; Heb. xi. 9. There were many peoples in Canaan (Gen. xv. 19—21; Deut. vii. 1); but the allusion to them seems too minute for this description.

14. *reproved*, &c.] Pharaoh, Gen. xii. 17, Abimelech, xx. 3, 7, 18.

15. *Saying, Touch not*, &c.] See Gen. xxvi. 11.

mine anointed] Lit. "My Messiahs," *i.e.* My chosen, consecrated ones. The word "Messiah" is used in a general sense: consecration to office by anointing is the custom of a later age than that of the patriarchs. See 1 K. xix. 16.

my prophets] See note on Gen. xx. 7. The word (*nabi*) is used in its general sense. "My servants inspired to know My will." In Exod. vii. 1, compared with iv. 15, the same word rather indicates a man inspired of God to declare His will. The two meanings are intimately connected. Abraham was a man inspired to see the future (*v.* 11), as well as a prophet holding direct intercourse with God. Isaac and Jacob were prophets in this latter sense (Gen. xxv. and xxviii.), and also in the more common meaning of the term (Gen. xxvii. 27, and xlix.). This (*v.* 15) concludes the portion of the psalm recited in 1 Chro. xvi. Next commences the narrative of the descent into Egypt.

16. *the land*] *i. e.* of Canaan. See Gen. xii. 10, xxvi. 1, for earlier famines.

the whole staff, &c.] The original word signifies a staff upon which a man rests (Ex. iv. 2); hence the staff or support of life (Lev. xxvi. 26); see also Isai. iii. 1; Ps. civ. 15. At the end of this verse must be supplied, "So He carried them out of the land of Canaan, and brought them into Egypt."

17. *He sent*, &c.] Lit. "He sent a man before them: Joseph was sold for a servant." Some interpret "a man" (emphatic), *i.e.* "a man of men:" but the meaning is rather, "He sent one before the rest to make ready: it was Joseph, sold for a servant, according to God's decree."

18. *he was laid in iron*, &c.] Marg. "his soul came into iron;" a similar expression Isai. xlvi. 2, "themselves," lit. "their souls," are gone into captivity. Ps. lvii. 4, "My soul is among lions," &c. The P. B. V. after the Vulg. and Chald., "The iron entered into his soul," is scarcely correct in grammar; offends against the parallelism, and conveys an idea too far removed from simplicity. See the note on Gen. xxxix. 20. Joseph's imprisonment is not there described as severe; but it may have been so at first.

19. *Until the time*, &c.] "Until the time that His word (*debaro*), Jehovah's word to Joseph, came true, the promise (*imrah*) of Jehovah tried him." Jehovah's promise, implied (Gen. xxxvii. 5, 9, &c.) through the history of Joseph, to raise him to an eminent rank above his brethren, is meant in both versicles. The word prophetical came true: the promise tried him, *i. e.* put him on his trial (Gen. xxxix. 7, 8), exhibited his triumph, and was accomplished! Rosenm. and others interpret "his word" as Joseph's word, and "the word of the Lord" as the gift of prophecy given to Joseph. "Until the time when his interpretation of dreams in prison came true, and his prophetical gift (Gen. xli. 16, &c.) exhibited him as chosen of God; or shewed him to be true and innocent." The P. B. V. is, "Until the time came that his cause was known," where "his cause" seems to mean "the general story about him, his deeds of innocence, which at the last became known." It is doubtful if the Hebrew can bear this

[f] Gen. 41. 14.

20 [f] The king sent and loosed him; *even* the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

[g] Gen. 41. 40. † Heb. *possession.*

21 [g] He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his † substance:

22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

[h] Gen 46. 6.

23 [h] Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

24 And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.

[i] Exod. 1. 8.

25 [i] He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.

[k] Exod. 3. 10.

26 [k] He sent Moses his servant; *and* Aaron whom he had chosen.

[l] Exod. 7. † Heb. *words of his signs.*

27 [l] They shewed † his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

[m] Exod. 10. 22.

28 [m] He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.

[n] Exod. 7. 20.

29 [n] He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.

[o] Exod. 8. 6.

30 [o] Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.

[p] Exod. 8. 17, 24.

31 [p] He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, *and* lice in all their coasts.

[q] Exod. 9. 23. † Heb. *He gave their rain hail.*

32 [q] † He gave them hail for rain, *and* flaming fire in their land.

33 He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.

[r] Exod. 10. 4.

34 [r] He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillers, and that without number,

35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

[s] Exod. 12. 29.

36 [s] He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength.

[t] Exod. 12. 35.

37 [t] He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and *there was* not one feeble *person* among their tribes.

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import; and the next versicle, "the word of the Lord," &c. against the parallelism, would introduce, not the above idea modified, but one, according to this rendering, wholly different.

20. *The king*, &c.] Gen. xli. 14: "Pharaoh sent and loosed him; the ruler of the people (sent) and let him go free."

22. *To bind*, &c.] Joseph, erst himself bound in fetters, had power to bind the princes of Egypt (Gen. xli. 44): and being gifted with wisdom above all Pharaoh's counsellors (Gen. xli. 38, 39), was able to instruct them in his lore.

23. *Israel*] *i. e.* Jacob, as expressed in the next line. The land of Ham, so called, probably, from Ham the father of Mizraim, the son of Noah: but there is authority for supposing that the word "Ham" or "Cham" is Egyptian, and that its import is "dark." See note, Gen. x. 6.

24. *And he increased his people*, &c.] In 215 years the family of Jacob, consisting of seventy persons, grew miraculously, for a special purpose, to the prodigious number of 600,000 men, Exod. i. 7, 9. So Deut. xxvi. 5.

25. *He turned their heart*, &c.] "It must be recollected," says Calvin, "that the origin of malice was in the Egyptians themselves, lest blame be imputed to God: by nature their hearts were full of wickedness that needed no external pressure." Similarly Augustine.

to deal subtilly, &c.] See Exod. i. 10.

27. *his signs*] Marg "words of His signs," or "long list of signs;" Pss. lxv. 3, cxlv. 5. The LXX. render, "His tales of signs," τοὺς λόγους τῶν σημείων αὐτοῦ, *i. e.* "His signs, of which the tale was given of God before." See Exod. iv. 28—30.

28. *and they rebelled not*] He sent darkness, and the Egyptians, for a time at least (Exod. x. 24), yielded obedience to His word. So Kay and others explain: but most commentators, noticing that the obedience of the Egyptians was momentary, and scarcely deserving of mention, refer these words to Moses and Aaron, who in this case obeyed the mandate fraught with peril, without doubt or hesitation such as sometimes appeared (Num. xx. 24, xxvii. 14). The Prayer-Book Version here is "and they were not obedient unto His word," after the LXX. But the meaning of the Hebrew text is plainly that of the A. V.

30. *Their land brought*, &c.] The second versicle, *in the chambers of their kings*, seems to be an exclamation of horror at sight of the swarming plague.

34. *caterpillers*] *i. e.* caterpillar-locusts.

36. *the firstborn*, &c.] Exod. xi. 1, &c.; Ps. lxxviii. 51.

37. *with silver and gold*] Exod. xii. 35, 36. *there was not one feeble person*, &c.] See

[a] Exod. 12. 33.
38 [a] Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.

[x] Exod. 13. 21.
39 [x] He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

[y] Exod. 16. 12.
40 [y] *The people* asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

[z] Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11. 1 Cor. 10. 4.
41 [z] He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 For he remembered his holy promise, *and* Abraham his servant.

43 And he brought forth his people with joy, *and* his chosen with [†] gladness:

[†] Heb. *singing*.

44 [a] And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;

[a] Deut. 6. 10, 11. Josh. 13. 7

45 That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.

Isai. v. 27, lxiii. 13. Not one feeble one was prevented by his feebleness from following. Some (see Ex. xiii. 18) render "there was not one feeble one among His tribes" (cf. Ps. cxxii. 4), a rendering more expressive than the other.

39. *He spread a cloud*, &c.] A cloud went before the people to lead them by day, and a pillar of fire by night; Exod. xiii. 21, xiv. 19; Ps. lxxviii. 14. But the idea here expressed (Note at end) is rather that the cloud was spread out as a protection against the sun: cf. Ex. xl. 19, and 34—38; Num. ix. 15, x. 34: also Isai. iv. 5, where a similar idea is imaged.

40. *The people asked*, &c.] Exod. xvi. 2, 3, 16; Ps. lxxviii. 18, &c.

bread of heaven] Exod. xvi. 4; Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25. The manna is intended, bread fashioned miraculously in heaven, out of which it fell and covered the camp.

41. *He opened the rock*, &c.] At Rephidim, Ex. xvii. 1, 2, and Kadesh, Num. xx. 11. See Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16, 20.

42. *he remembered*, &c.] Exod. ii. 24.

44. *the labour of the people*] The cities, vineyards, and cultivated fields of the people, Deut. vi. 10, 11. See also Isai. xlv. 14.

45. *That they*, &c.] On this condition, that, unlike the inhabitants whose labour they enjoyed, they should for ever be a people devoted to Jehovah, and stedfast in His law. Deut. iv. 40, xxvi. 16, &c.

The connection between this psalm and the next must be noticed. Psalm cv. details God's mercies to His servants; Psalm cvi. the doings of Israel in return. The short sententious style of the poetry of these psalms ('Plain Commentary,' Vol. II. p. 233) may have been intended to assist the memory, and is remarkable. These psalms, shortly recounting God's dealing with His people, and Israel's behaviour under it, may have been committed to memory, as catechisms for the instruction of the young.

Throughout the psalm the author supposes the perpetual miraculous interference of Jehovah. Abraham visits the land by special revelation, a stranger, without a foot of ground in which to bury his dead: Joseph, by special providence, is sent before to prepare: Jacob, through a sore famine and longing desire to see his son, passes into Egypt with his family. God multiplies the people and stirs up the jealousy of Pharaoh: the taskmasters double the tasks and apply the lash: the people cry out to God, and Moses appears! The history is incomprehensible, and a mere myth, without miracle. Its substantial truth is proved by the life of the Jewish people founded upon it, and by the literature of the people which also is founded upon it. If miracle be allowed, its measure may be discussed, without fear, but with reverence suitable to the field of God's operations. The details of the miracles are of course copied from Exodus, but they are realized with a singular intensity; inexplicable except upon the supposition of their occurrence, and of the profound impression made by them upon the Jewish mind.

The ninth plague is put first (*v.* 28), and the fifth and sixth omitted; but the order is generally that of Exod. vii., viii., ix., &c. The order in Ps. lxxviii. 44, &c. is different.

NOTE on PSALM CV. 39.

The Hebrew word פרש is used in Exod. xl. 19, Num. iv. 6, for the "spreading out" of the covering of the tabernacle; and in Joel ii. 2, for the morning light "spread" on the mountain.

PSALM CVI.

1 The psalmist exhorteth to praise God. 4 He prayeth for pardon of sin, as God did with the fathers. 7 The story of the people's rebellion, and God's mercy. 47 He concludeth with prayer and praise.

[1] PRAISE ye the LORD. O [a] give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? *who* can shew forth all his praise?

3 Blessed *are* they that keep judgment, *and* he that doeth righteousness at all times.

4 Remember me, O LORD, with the favour *that thou bearest unto* thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;

5 That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the

[1] Heb. *Hallelujah.*
[a] Ps. 107. 1. & 118. 1. & 136. 1.

PSALM CVI.

A general resemblance is noticeable between Pss. lxxviii., cv., cvi., which are in some sort supplementary one to the other. Ps. lxxviii. is didactic: Ps. cv. a song of praise: Ps. cvi. a confession of sin and prayer for pardon; with which compare Dan. ix. 4, 5; Neh. ix. 4, &c. All these psalms seem of the date of the captivity; Ps. cvi., perhaps, written towards its conclusion. The words of 1 Chro. xvi. 7 appear to say that David put into the hands of Asaph and his brethren a psalm of which *vv.* 1, 47, 48 of this psalm (with small variations) formed a part. But the words recited do not say this expressly. The import of the Hebrew is, "Then on that day did David first appoint to thank the LORD by Asaph and his brethren," or, "Then on that day did David lay a charge upon the chief (or head of all the choirs, *v.* 5) to thank the LORD by Asaph and his brethren." The LXX. render ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τότε ἔταξεν Δαυὶδ ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ αἰνεῖν τὸν Κύριον ἐν χειρὶ Ἀσὰφ καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ. The meaning seems to be, that David, at the inauguration of the ark, for the first time caused a psalm to be sung in commemoration of God's mercies; and committed the office of commemoration on the first occasion to Asaph and his brethren. The psalm then composed is not, probably, given; the psalm which follows in 1 Chro. xvi. 8 ff. may have been put together afterwards, and used at the time of the composition of the Book of Chronicles; or a portion only of it may have proceeded from David, and have been added to in subsequent times.

After an introduction, *vv.* 1—3, and a general confession of sin, *v.* 6, the psalm describes in order the disobediences of the people and their punishments, in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the waste, as narrated in Exodus and Numbers, often in the very words of those records, *vv.* 7—33; next their sins of disobedience after the occupation of the land, and alternate chastisements and deliverances by the hand of God, *vv.* 34—46; and concludes with a prayer, *v.* 47, for deliverance out of present pressing captivity. A characteristic of the psalm is a perpetual allusion to, and frequent quotation of, the words of Exodus, of Isaiah, and of the later psalms. Ewald, Hupfeld, and others, mainly on account of the citations just noticed, refer the psalm to a date after the captivity; but the absence of any allusion to the great restoration, to Jerusalem, or to Zion, makes this hypothesis, for which no cogent argument is produced, somewhat unsatisfactory and improbable.

1. *Praise ye the LORD*] Heb. "Hallelujah." See cxi., cxii., cxiii., cxvii., cxxxv., cxlvi., cxlvii., cxlviii., cxlix.

O give thanks, &c.] See Pss. cv., cvii., cxxxvi. 1; also Jer. xxxiii. 11; 2 Chro. v. 13; 1 Macc. iv. 24.

3. *Blessed are they*, &c.] If any distinction is to be made between *keeping judgment* and *doing righteousness*, the first may describe inward rectitude, the second its outward exhibition in act. The transition from the plural to the singular number seems a poetical licence. This verse is a text to that which follows in the psalm; to which, after *vv.* 4, 5 of individual application and supplication, the Psalmist returns in *v.* 6.

4, 5. *Remember*, &c.] "May I share in the favour which Thou shewest (one day) to Thy people: May Thy salvation, fatherly care, and guidance be mine when it is theirs: May I see the felicity of Thy chosen (Ps. cv. 6, 43) and rejoice with them in prosperity, as now I suffer with them in adversity." A prayer for individual good to arise (if it shall please God) from favour shewn to His people: a covert expression of the wish openly declared in *v.* 47, and naturally arising from the sentiment of *v.* 3 preceding; in which the blessedness of those that serve God, and whom He regards with favour, is earnestly proclaimed. The parallel words, "favour," "salvation," are the same in Isaiah xlix. 8, and in the psalm.

gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.

6 We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.

7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; [b] but provoked *him* at the sea, *even* at the Red sea.

8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.

9 He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

10 And he saved them from the hand of him that hated *them*, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

11 [c] And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.

12 [d] Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.

13 [e] † They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel:

14 [f] But † lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

15 [g] And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

16 [h] They envied Moses also in the camp, *and* Aaron the saint of the LORD.

17 [i] The earth opened, and swal-

[b] Exod. 14. 11, 12.
[c] Exod. 14. 27. & 15. 5.
[d] Exod. 14. 31. & 15. 1.
[e] Exod. 15. 24. & 16. 2.
† Heb. *They made haste, they forgat.*
[f] Numb. 11. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 6.
† Heb. *lusted a lust.*
[g] Numb. 11. 31.
[h] Numb. 16. 1, &c.
[i] Numb. 16. 31. Deut. 11. 6.

6, 7. *We have sinned*, &c.] The Psalmist speaks of himself and people, of the present time and of olden times from the very first, as one family, with one father, &c.; see Ps. xxii. 4. "We in our exile, and our fathers from Moses downwards, are examples of disobedience and its punishment. Our fathers forgat His miracles in Egypt, and provoked Him (or rebelled against Him) at the sea (Exod. xiv. 10, 11, 12), before it opened and made a way for them to pass." Compare 1 K. viii. 47; Jer. iii. 25, xiv. 20; Lam. iii. 42; Dan. ix. 5, which resemble the text.

multitude of thy mercies] See Isai. lxiii. 7; Lam. iii. 32; infr. *v.* 45.

but provoked him at the sea] Instead of the latter words, the LXX. render, "But provoked Him (ἀναβαίνοντες) ascending." It is easy to see that they must have read עֹלִים instead of עַל־יָם.

the Red sea] See note on Exod. x. 19.

9. *He rebuked*, &c.] See Ps. civ. 7; Isai. l. 2.

he led them through the depths] Or, "the sea," of hollow abysses, and rough projecting rocky eminences, as though it had been through a "level wilderness" of dry land: Exod. xiv. Compare Isai. li. 10, lxiii. 13; Nahum i. 4.

11. *there was not one*, &c.] The words, almost, of Exod. xiv. 28.

12. *Then believed*, &c.] Ex. xiv. 31, xv. 1. The song of praise is mentioned, not to illustrate the faith and gratitude, but to shew the fickleness of the people, who instantly forgat His works, &c.

13, 14. *They soon*, &c.] Ex. xv. 24, xvi. 2; Num. xi. 4. They waited not a moment to see what God proposed; but **made haste, and lusted a lust** (marg.), **and tempted**—or tried and endeavoured to constrain—Him, with importunate eager desire: see Ps. lxxviii. 18, &c.; cvii. 11.

15. *leanness*] The Hebrew word, which commonly means "consumption," "leanness" (Isai. x. 16, xvii. 4), is used to describe the character and effects of the plague, or withering sickness, by which, on account of their lust, thousands were slain: Num. xi. 33, 34; Ps. lxxviii. 31. The words used in the latter place may possibly be designed to convey the idea of such a wasting emaciating plague that smote first and palpably *the fattest*, *i.e.* the strongest of them.

soul] (Num. xi. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 50) means "life," or "body," or "the part of the system nurtured by food." In the original a play upon the word *razon*, "plague," is noticeable; the change of a letter makes it *ratzon*, "desire," or "longing."

16. *They envied*, &c.] See Num. xi. 29: and for the history, Num. xvi. 3—35. *Aaron the saint*, &c.; "Aaron whom God had separated from the congregation, and sanctified as His priest."

17. *The earth opened*, &c.] And swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; Num. xvi. 24, 26, 27, 32, xxvi. 10. Two of the principal offenders only, the sons of Reuben, are mentioned in the psalm, as sometimes in the original narrative, 25, 27; see *v.* 1.

18. *a fire*] Num. xvi. 35.

19. *They made a calf in Horeb*, &c.] In

lowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.

18 [k]And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.

19 [l]They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.

20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

21 They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, *and* terrible things by the Red sea.

23 [m]Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them*.

24 Yea, they despised †the pleasant land, they believed not his word:

25 [n]But murmured in their tents, *and* hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.

26 Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

27 †To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.

28 [o]They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

29 Thus they provoked *him* to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.

† Heb. *a land of desire.*
[n] Numb. 14. 2.
† Heb. *To make them fall*
[o] Numb. 25. 3.

Horeb the Mount of God, on which the divine glory rested: Exod. xxxii. 4; Deut. ix. 8—12: against the commandment, in Exod. xx. 4, 5; Deut. iv. 16, &c.

20. *changed*] LXX. ἠλλάξαντο, "bartered." Rom. i. 23.

their glory] *i.e.* "Jehovah the glory of His people, by Whose aid they had obtained a name above all peoples;" Deut. iv. 6—8, x. 21; Ps. iii. 3: or, it may be, "Jehovah their glorious God, Who had accompanied them in the cloud and fire, and Whom they had seen close to them in Sinai in His majesty;" Jer. ii. 11.

22. *land of Ham*] Ps. lxxviii. 51; cv. 23, 27.

23. *Therefore he said*, &c.] See Ezek. xx. 8: and for the history, Exod. xxxii. 10; Deut. ix. 13, 14, 19, 26. "Had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the gap, as a valiant soldier guarding his city when a breach is made in the wall, and stayed Him by prayers and entreaties, lest He should destroy them." Similar images Ezek. xiii. 5, xxii. 30.

24. *Yea, they despised*, &c.] Num. xiii. and xiv. They relinquished all desire for the pleasant land (Jer. iii. 19; Zech. vii. 14) when they heard the report of the spies: and credited not His oft-repeated promise, that they should possess it; see Num. xiv. 31.

25. *But murmured*, &c.] Num. xiv. 2; Deut. i. 27.

26. *Therefore he lifted*, &c.] Num. xiv. 30 (margin): He lifted up His hand, and swore (Ex. vi. 8) that they should not see the land, &c. See Gen. xiv. 22; Deut. xxxii. 40; Ezek. xx. 23; Dan. xii. 7; Ps. cxliv. 8.

to overthrow] *i.e.* **destroy**; Num. xiv. 29, 32, 37.

27. *To overthrow*, &c.] The threat of exile in the second versicle is not in Numbers: it comes from Lev. xxvi. 33, of which the words are repeated, Deut. xxviii. 64; see also Ezek. v. 12; Jer. ix. 16. As the word rendered in our version to "overthrow," in *v.* 26, seems to mean there to "destroy," it should have the same meaning here: Lev. xxvi. 38 supports this interpretation. See, too, Ezek. xx. 23, where, with one word changed, this *v.* 27 of the psalm occurs.

28. *They joined*, &c.] Num. xxv. 3, 5; "They entered into a close connection and communion (1 Cor. x. 18, the same word of technical import is used in the psalm and in Numbers) with Baal-Peor, the Moabite idol (or, Lord, worshipped on the summit of Peor), and **ate sacrifices offered to dead things**, instead of to the living God;" see Jer. x. 10; Ps. cxv. 3, 4, 5. The idols of the Moabites are described contemptuously as "dead things" (Wis. xiii. 10), or as "the spirits of dead men," according to the use of the original word in Deut. xviii. 11; Isai. viii. 19: see Selden 'de Diis Syr.' I. 5. Above, *v.* 19, "*a calf*" is a contemptuous description of the image which they worshipped in Horeb.

29. *brake in upon*, &c.] The image is that of a river which has burst its barriers; see Exod. xix. 24. The plague is the slaughter inflicted upon the people by command of Moses; Num. xxv. 4, 5, 8, 9, 18.

30. *Then stood up*, &c.] Num. xxv. 7.

executed judgment, &c.] Executed the office of a judge, according to Moses' command

p Numb. 25. 7.

30 p Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and *so* the plague was stayed.

31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

q Numb. 20. 13.

32 q They angered *him* also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

r Deut. 7. 2.

34 They did not destroy the nations, r concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

s Judg. 1. 21.

35 s But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.

36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.

37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

38 And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.

40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.

41 And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

t Judg. 2. 16.

43 t Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked *him* with

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in Num. xxv. 5. It is not improbable that Phinehas, being the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron, was actually a judge to whom the command was issued. The act of Phinehas was counted a righteous act for ever memorable, and rewarded by God with a perpetual priesthood (Num. xxv. 10—13). In Gen. xv. 6 (to which there is a manifest allusion) faith is counted for righteousness: here an act, springing from faith and a divine impulse, is counted.

32. *at the waters of strife*] Num. xx. 3, 10, 13; Ex. xvii. 2, 7; Pss. lxxxi. 7, xcv. 8. Sometimes in the A. V. the Hebrew word Meribah is translated as in the text; sometimes it is left untranslated.

so that it went ill, &c.] As he himself says, Deut. i. 37, iii. 26, xxxii. 50, 51. See also Num. xx. 12, 24.

for their sakes] As they provoked him to it; infr. 33.

33. *his spirit*] *i.e.* his soul. Gen. xli. 8; Deut. ii. 30; Ps. lxxviii. 8.

so that he spake unadvisedly, &c.] Num. xx. 10: he questioned the multitude, hotly, hastily; and struck the rock, having been commanded to speak to it (*v.* 8), twice, shewing a faithless impatience; see Num. xx. 12; Deut. i. 37. Some interpret the words *they provoked his spirit*, of the people, or of Moses and Aaron (Num. xx. 24, xxvii. 14), provoking the Spirit of God: and the word which is rendered here "provoked" seems generally used of men provoking God; see Ps. lxxviii. 17, 40; Isai. lxiii. 10; and this very psalm, *vv.* 7, 43, &c. But in the above places the expression is not that men provoked "the Spirit" of God, but that they provoked "the Most High," or "provoked," without any mention of the subject: and the phrase "they (*i.e.* Moses and Aaron) provoked His Spirit," *i.e.* the Spirit of God—looking at other places in which it occurs—seems too strong a description of the impatience of Moses and Aaron.

34. *They did not destroy*, &c.] See the command, Ex. xxiii. 31, 32; xxxiv. 11—15; Deut. vii. 16, &c.

36. *which were a snare*, &c.] Exod. xxiii. 33; Judges ii. 2, 3, 11, &c.

37. *unto devils*, &c.] See Deut. xxxii. 17. The original word in both places means "lords," or "masters," such as Baal (see *v.* 28), which means "Lord," or Moloch which means "Master" or "King." In 1 Cor. viii. 5, the false gods of heathendom are styled "Lords;" in Wis. xiii. 2, "Presidents of the world."

39. *Thus were they defiled*, &c.] An historical description, *vv.* 39—43, to the time of Judges.

their own works] The idolatrous rites which they imitated are called *their own works*, as invented by man.

went a whoring, &c.] Compare the command Ex. xxxiv. 14, 15, and Lev. xx. 5, &c.; see also Judges ii. 17, viii. 33.

41. *And he gave them*, &c.] Judg. ii. 14, iii. 12, 13, x. 7, 9; Ps. lxxviii. 59—61.

42. *and they were brought*, &c.] Judges iii. 30, iv. 23. But now the expressions originally applied in these places to their enemies are applied to Israel.

43. *Many times*, &c.] Judges ii. 10. They provoked Him with their counsel (Deut. xxxii.

im- ish- , ened. their counsel, and were [l]brought low for their iniquity.

44 Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:

45 [n]And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.

46 He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.

47 Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, *and* to triumph in thy praise.

48 Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, **Amen.** Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CVII.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth the redeemed, in praising God, to observe his manifold providence,* 4 *over travellers,* 10 *over captives,* 17 *over sick men,* 23 *over seamen,* 33 *and in divers varieties of life.*

O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[a] Ps. 106. 1. & 118. 1. & 136. 1.

2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say *so*, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

28; Jer. vii. 24), which was not His counsel, and were brought low (Lev. xxvi. 39; Ezek. xxiv. 23, xxxiii. 10) through their sin. With this verse the prospect opens, and sketches the history to present time.

45. *And he remembered,* &c.] See Lev. xxvi. 41, 42.
and repented, &c.] Deut. xxxii. 36; Ps. xc. 13. The next verse explains in what way He shewed mercy.

46. *He made them also,* &c.] In the words of Solomon's prayer, 1 K. viii. 50. See also 2 Chro. xxx. 9. Other illustrations of the text are 2 K. xxv. 27; Neh. i. 11; Jer. xlii. 12; Dan. i. 9, &c.

47. *Save us,* &c.] According to promise, Deut. xxx. 3, 4; and prophecy, Isai. xi., xii.

It can scarcely be doubted that these words refer to deliverance from Babylonish captivity, which the next psalm (see Ps. cvii. 3) speaks of as accomplished. This verse, 47 (says Delitzsch), is the point of the psalm; which touches upon sin, and punishment, and upon mercy, the most signal of the attributes of God. Of this He is pointedly — may it be said?—artfully, yet with profound reverence reminded, in *vv.* 45, 46, with a view to *v.* 47, the conclusion. The conclusion would, however, be abrupt without *v.* 48, which may, accordingly, be justly regarded (though some commentators think otherwise) as part of the psalm. It also is an appropriate end of the Fourth Book, or Book, generally, of Psalms of the Captivity; with which compare the last *vv.* of Pss. xli., lxxii., lxxxix., the ends, respectively, of Books I., II., III.

FIFTH BOOK. PSALMS CVII.—CL.

PSALM CVII.

There are resemblances between this psalm and the preceding Pss. civ., cv., cvi.; and perhaps the author is the same. The burden of the psalm is deliverance, through Jehovah's mercy, from the sharp trials of exile, travel, sickness, imprisonment, and a furious tempest. Are these perils connected? Are they for the most part connected with a return from captivity? Or are they the sharp ordinary perils of life? It is not unreasonable to suppose that deliverance from Babylonish captivity (which general opinion suggests as the occasion of the psalm) called forth this song of thanksgiving for deliverance in manifold trials common to man.

The song of *the redeemed,* with the exception of *vv.* 2—8, constitutes the psalm to *v.* 32. It begins with the words of Jeremiah, xxxiii. 11. and is interrupted in *vv.* 2—8 by a description of those who sing it. "The redeemed of God (Isai. xxxv. 9, 10, li. 11, lxii. 12), whom He has redeemed from the hand of *the enemy,* or, of *calamity* (*v.* 6, *trouble,* the same word in the orig.); and gathered from all lands (Ps. cvi. 47; Isai. xi. 12), from solitary wanderings, and hunger, and thirst; and led forth safe when they cried to Him; and brought to a city of refuge:—sing His mercies to all those who pray to Him in similar solitary perilous (Acts viii. 26) wandering, strict imprisonment, mortal sickness, and furious tempests (*vv.* 2, 3, 4...32)." The theme of the concluding portion is the same (*i.e.* adversity and prosperity dependent upon God), but the treatment general. The expressions (*vv.* 34, 35) seem too strong for direct application to the case of the restored people. They are the observations of the Psalmist upon God's dealings with man, illustrated and suggested, haply, by the aspect of his own land, and by God's recent dealings with His people. A noticeable feature of this psalm, in which it resembles the three preceding, is a frequent allusion to, or quotation of, Isaiah and Job.

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and †from the south.

† Heb. *from the sea.*

4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he delivered them out of their distresses.

7 And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

8 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *being* bound in affliction and iron;

11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:

12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and *there was* none to help.

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3. *from the south*] The margin reads, "from the sea." So Heb., LXX., Syr., Vulg. The word rendered "the sea" means commonly "the Mediterranean," or "the west:" see Gen. xii. 8; Exod. x. 19. In other places, where the application is less obvious, Isai. xi. 11, xlix. 12, Hengstenberg and others conceive "the sea" to mean "the Mediterranean." The "Red Sea" is so famous in Jewish story that in any narrative or poem connected with that story and the sea in question, as Ps. cxiv. 3, 5, it may well be styled "the sea;" but not in a narrative in which there is nothing to direct attention to that particular sea (Rosenm. quotes somewhat inconsiderately the last-named passage in proof that the Hebrew word "the sea" means the Red Sea), nor in a description, such as we have here, of the points of the compass viewed from the Holy City, with nothing to direct the mind to the Red Sea as one of them. The points, probably, are not accurately defined: they are the rising and the setting sun, the north, and the sea; *i.e.* the Mediterranean Sea washing Syria, Egypt, and the south.

On the return from Babylon, no doubt, exiles passed to their homes from all parts of the world. Perhaps the south is left out, because none came direct from the south through the waste. In the enumeration of the quarters of the horizon in Ps. lxxv. 6, the north is omitted, as no help could come from that quarter.

4. *They wandered*, &c.] This verse, as above noted, in continuation of *vv.* 2, 3, describes the condition of the Redeemed of God who sing His mercies to them and to sufferers like them. Deliverance from exile, and from solitary dangerous wandering, manifestly, is the occasion of the psalm. It is not easy to say what special wanderings are intended. Some traits are borrowed from the journey in the wilderness of Sinai (see Pss. lxviii. 6, lxxviii. 40). "Travel in distant, unexplored regions," says Calvin, "may be meant, enforced of necessity, or by foreign compulsion, and of which captivity in the hands of merciless robbers might easily be an accompaniment. All such miserable wanderers and captives are admonished, that chance does not direct their steps, but God's mercy redeems." Moll remarks that the description in *v.* 4 is historical: the descriptions in *vv.* 10, 17, 23, &c. are general. The first begins with a verb, the rest with participles: the burden of the psalm, *vv.* 15, 21, 31, seems to supply the verb in each case.

6. *Then they cried*, &c.] The original words, by their order and grammatical form, seem to express that the cry for help was followed immediately by help. Cf. Ps. cvi. 44 (orig.).

8. *Oh that men*, &c.] The purport is rather, "All those described (*vv.* 2—7), *i.e.* the Redeemed of God, whom He has redeemed from exile, wandering, and misery, **shall** or **ought to** sing the goodness of Jehovah."

9. *the longing soul*] The same words (orig.) in Isai. xxix. 8.

10. *Such as sit*, &c.] Imprisonment in the darkness and gloom of a hopeless bondage on account of sin, and escape through earnest prayer, are the subject of this thanksgiving. The imprisonment of Joseph (Ps. cv. 18) seems to furnish some traits. The captivity at Babylon may have suggested the general theme. But it is most in accordance with what seems the design of the psalm to suppose that ordinary sharp suffering of man in bondage, through sin, is chiefly portrayed: such as that of Jehoahaz (2 K. xxiii. 33, 34) in Egypt.

darkness and in the shadow of death] See Isai. ix. 2, xlii. 7, xlix. 9. Virg. 'Æn.' VI. 734.

affliction and iron] Job xxxvi. 8 (Heb.).

11. *Because they rebelled*, &c.] Against *the words of God* declared in His law or by His prophets, *and contemned the counsel* or purpose of God, to punish, sooner or later, sin. See Isai. v. 19, xiv. 26, &c.

13 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saved them out of their distresses.

14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

15 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

16 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

17 Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

18 [b]Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

[b] Job 33. 20.

19 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses.

20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.

21 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with †rejoicing.

† Heb. *singing.*

23 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

24 These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.

25 For he commandeth, and †raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

† Heb. *maketh to stand.*

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12. *labour*] *i.e.* misery.

16. *gates of brass and...bars of iron*] Isai. xlv. 2.

17. *Fools because of*, &c.] The sick to death, whose sickness is owing to folly and sent of God, cry to Jehovah in their misery, and He rescues them from the yawning grave. By folly is meant want of wisdom, *i.e.* ignorance of God and pravity of life which issues in ruin (Job v. 3: see too Prov. i. 7, xii. 15; Ps. xiv. 1, and specially Ps. xxxviii. 5).

18. *gates of death*] See Ps. ix. 13.

20. *He sent his word*, &c.] The tenses are rather present. "He sends His word, and heals them," or "He sends His word to heal them, and rescues them from their grave-pits." The rendering "grave-pits" instead of "*destructions*" is to be preferred on account of Job xxxiii. 18, 22 and Lam. iv. 20. *His word:* the Word of God is His messenger, and runs very swiftly (Ps. cxlvii. 15); and returns not to Him that sent without executing His commands (Isai. lv. 11); descends upon Israel, and abides with His prophets (Isai. ix. 8); and tells to every man his work (Ps. cv. 19); and is often, as in this place, a Physician sent to heal the sick in body and spirit. Such passages, and others like them (Zech. ix. 1, &c.) prepare us for the doctrine that the Word of God, whereby the heavens were made (Ps. xxxiii. 6), expresses not simply a power or energy, but a personal existence: (John i. 1—5.)

In the place of Job above quoted (xxxiii. 18—22) there is a description, akin to this, of a sufferer rescued by God from the grave to which he is brought nigh. The rescue is entrusted to a "messenger," to "one of a thousand," "an interpreter," to whom God says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit." The resemblance between this psalm and the Book of Job compels an interpretation of this passage by the psalm, and *vice versâ*. The Word of God is symbolized in both places, the Angel, the Interpreter, Who heals the bodies and souls of men. So Theodoret remarks upon the verse: "The Word," he says, "Which is God, sent as man from God, and dwelling among men, healed all manner of wounds of the souls of men, and restored to health and invigorated man's reason, which sin had corrupted and debilitated." These texts, &c., are due to Delitzsch.

23. *They that go down*, &c.] They that *go down* to the low-lying sea, and traverse the *great waters* (Isai. xxiii. 3), *in ships* (see Isai. xlii. 10, Jonah i. 3). From the near coast the bed of the sea seems to lie low. The *works* of the Lord, and *His wonders in the deep*, are not simply His miracles of creation, but His "tempests" and "miracles of deliverance." Dean Stanley, 'Jewish Ch.' Vol. II p. 186, remarks that the description in this psalm of the sea, its terrors and occupations, could not have been written before the reign of Solomon.

25. *He commandeth*] So Ps. cv. 31 and 34: *He spake:* the same word in the Heb. as here: see also Gen. i. 3, &c.

thereof] The *sea* is understood in the *deep* just mentioned. Kay and others understand "His," *i.e.* God's waves: so He commissions "His wind," Ps. cxlvii. 18, to do His work: but see *v.* 29, note.

26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and †are at their wits' end.

† Heb. *all their wisdom is swallowed*

28 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

31 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

32 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;

34 A fruitful land into †barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

† Heb. *saltness.*

35 [c]He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.

c Isai. 41. 18.

36 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;

37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.

38 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

40 [d]He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the ‖wilderness, *where there is* no way.

d Job 12. 21.

‖ Or, *void place.*

41 [e]Yet setteth he the poor on high ‖from affliction, and maketh *him* families like a flock.

e 1 Sam. 2. 8. Psal. 113. 7, 8.

‖ Or, *after*

42 [f]The righteous shall see *it*, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

f Job 5. 16 & 22. 19.

43 Whoso *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

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27. *are at their wits' end*] Margin "All their wisdom is swallowed up," *i.e.* "All their skill is made nought." The description in Ovid, 'Trist.' Lib. I. El. xi. 20—30, is so similar as to illustrate and explain the text. "The waves rise up in mountains, then sink into deep valleys; the pilot skills not what to seek or shun; and his art is folly."

29. *the waves thereof*] Heb. "their waves," *i.e.* "the waves of the mariners, the waves by which they were nearly overwhelmed," according to Kay, Delitzsch, Bunsen, &c. But this seems a harsh and unscriptural expression: probably the reference is to the sea, which above (*v.* 23) is styled, first "the sea," and secondly "great waters," though it has not been mentioned, distinctly, in the plural form; see Pss. lxv. 7, lxxxix. 9; Job xxxviii. 11, &c.

30. *because they*] *i.e.* the "waves," are quiet and calm; see Jonah i. 11.

This psalm may, in a sense, be regarded as prophetical. Christ rescues from a captivity sterner than that of Babylon: points the way in a wilderness more intricate and horrid than that of Sinai: saves from sickness and death those who cry to Him with faith. He saved His followers from a furious tempest, Matt. viii. 26, to shew Himself indeed the Lord of nature, and to point for ever the deep intent of this psalm, and its full interpretation through Him.

33, 34, &c.] See Isai. xxxv. 7, xli. 18, xliv. 27, l. 2; of which the second is *v.* 35 of the psalm: *v.* 34 contains a plain allusion to Sodom (see Deut. xxix. 23), *v.* 35 to the Israelites in the desert.

38, 39, 40. He blesses a nation and multiplies it by His rich mercies. Again He visits it with chastisement, and minishes it, as once He enlarged it: pouring contempt upon its rulers, and causing them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. Yet remembers He His mercy: rescues His needy ones from misery: multiplies them as a flock of sheep (Job xxi. 11), and restores them to their wonted state.

The very words of Job (xii. 21—23) and of Isaiah (specially xli. 18) seem to be introduced bodily into the psalm, to shew how the fortunes of men, and of the chosen people, continually illustrated their sayings. It would also seem from the concluding words (*v.* 43, with which compare Hos. xiv. 9), that the allusions in the psalm, and the facts referred to, were well known to those who sang it and heard it first. Would that we could know them as they did! But every man, from his own experience, can supply similar examples of hopeless peril and of miraculous escape.

PSALM CVIII.

1 *David encourageth himself to praise God.* 5 *He prayeth for God's assistance according to his promise.* 11 *His confidence in God's help.*

A Song *or* Psalm of David.

O GOD, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.

2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

4 For thy mercy *is* great above the heavens: and thy truth *reacheth* unto the [1]clouds.

Or, *skies.*

5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth;

6 [a]That thy beloved may be delivered: save *with* thy right hand, and answer me.

Psal. 60. 5.

7 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

8 Gilead *is* mine; Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; Judah *is* my lawgiver;

9 Moab *is* my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.

10 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

11 *Wilt* not *thou*, O God, *who* hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?

12 Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the help of man.

13 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM CVIII.

This psalm is constructed almost word for word out of two other psalms commonly reputed Davidical. The first five verses are almost identical with the last verses of Ps. lvii., and the last eight with *vv.* 5—12 of Ps. lx. The connexion of the two psalms here united is not obvious; nor the purpose of the composite psalm. It is not likely that David himself should have united two incongruous parts of his own compositions.

The variations, generally, of phrase between this psalm and the psalms from which it is composed are unimportant. Pss. lvii. and lx. are both Elohistic: in *v.* 3 of this psalm Jehovah is substituted for Adonai. The ironical address to Philistia in *v.* 9 is changed into a simple expression of triumph. Other slight alterations, which do not improve the force of the verses altered, are noticed below.

1. *my heart is fixed,* &c.] In Ps. lvii. 7, 8, this is repeated. Instead of the words *even with my glory*, of which the meaning is obscure, we have there, *v.* 8, *Awake up, my glory,* &c.

4. *above the heavens*] Pss. lvii. 10; cxiii. 4; Ezra ix. 6: see Note below.

6. *That thy beloved,* &c.] In Ps. lx. 5, the connexion in which these words occur is different. The first versicle here depends upon the second.

8. See the note on Ps. lx. 8.

10. There is a slight variation from Ps. lx. 9: see Note below.

Herder translates this psalm ('E. P.' II. 368), regarding it as a morning hymn: see *vv.* 2—4. Kay regards it as a rejoicing over the morning, so to say, of restoration from captivity. Clauss., Rüdiger, Rosenm., Hitzig, &c., suppose it put together to celebrate one of the Maccabæan victories. The conclusion, which is a supplication for aid, and lament over calamity, does not correspond to this hypothesis.

NOTES on PSALM CVIII. 4, 10.

4. Some MSS. read עד instead of מעל: LXX., ἐπάνω; the parallelism rather requires the reading עד; and the meaning is "unto the heavens."

10. The word מצור is replaced by מבצר, a more common word in this sense. See Ps. xxxi. 22; 2 Chro. viii. 5.

PSALM CIX.

1 *David, complaining of his slanderous enemies, under the person of Judas devoteth them.* 16 *He sheweth their sin.* 21 *Complaining of his own misery, he prayeth for help.* 29 *He promiseth thankfulness.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

HOLD not thy peace, O God of my praise;

2 For the mouth of the wicked and the † mouth of the deceitful † are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I *give myself unto* prayer.

† Heb. *mouth of deceit.*
† Heb. *have opened themselves.*

Psalm CIX.

The Psalmist, contemned and despised (*v.* 25) by those to whom he had done good (*vv.* 4. 5), and by whom he had been cursed often (*vv.* 17—28), and persecuted to death (*vv.* 16, 20. 31), betakes himself, at first, to prayer as his single refuge (*v.* 4): then addresses himself to God, with Whom is vengeance, and hurls back the curse, which his foes had imprecated upon him, upon themselves, with a fire and energy, which seem to some surprising in this Divine collection of hymns. But is a Christian spirit to be expected always in the psalms? Would the words of Christ (Matt. v. 43, 44, &c.) have been uttered, if the spirit which animated the Jewish people, and exhibited, not unfrequently, in their annals, had been always that which He came to inculcate? Under the Old Covenant, calamity, extending from father to son, was the meed of transgression: prosperity, *vice versâ*, of obedience: (see Solomon's prayer, 2 Chro. vi. 23): and these prayers of the Psalmist (cf. Pss. x. 13, xii. 1, lviii. 10, &c.) may express the wish that God's providential government of His people should be asserted in the chastisement of the enemy of God and man. For we may assume that the enemy spoken of is not simply an enemy of David, but a liar, murderer, slanderer, such as Doeg, Ahithophel, Shimei, &c., of whose guiltiness there could be no doubt. So Calvin, "Tenendum est Davidem quoties diras istas concepit nec immodico carnis affectu fuisse commotum nec privatas causas egisse." David himself, again and again, in deed and word shewed a forgiving spirit: only here, and it may be in Pss. xxxv., lviii. 10, lxix., a spirit of vengeance, or rather, of entreaty for God's vengeance, upon His foes. A prayer for the punishment of sin abstractedly, or of sinners collectively, would not offend: it is the entreaty for sternest chastisement of an individual in this case that seems to shew a rancour alien to the tenor of the psalms. But it must also be noticed that the singular and plural are interchanged once or twice in this psalm: and it is at any rate doubtful, if, when the singular is mentioned, the Psalmist does not in fact idealize the image of his foes, and speak not specially of one, but still of many collectively, and of their sin, as abstracted from any individual. It is also well observed by Kay that even in the 35th, 69th, and this psalm, there is evidence not only of the meekness but of the persevering love of the sufferer; Pss. xxxv. 13, lxix. 4, 10, cix. 4, &c.

The inscriptions refer Pss. cviii., cix., cx., to David; and St Peter in the Acts, i. 20, quotes the cix th psalm as of David. No argument of much weight, is alleged against these authorities.

Verses 1 to 5 contain a description of the malice, in word and deed, of David's foes: *vv.* 6—20, as some think, the imprecations of those foes on David, or, as is most likely, the terrible imprecation of God's vengeance upon them and theirs: *vv.* 21—25 the pitiable condition of the Psalmist provoking God's compassion; for which (*vv.* 26—30) he prays, with confident expectation of being heard; because of his deep need, and in order to the instruction of others, and the putting to shame of his foes.

1. *Hold not thy peace*] See Pss. xxviii. 1, xxxv. 22. "Be not silent and (as it were) indifferent to the haughty words and wicked deeds of my foes."

O God of my praise] *i.e.* "O God Whom I praise continually for mercies continually new," see *v.* 30; and Pss. xxii. 26, lxxi. 6; Jer. xvii. 14.

2. *For the mouth*, &c.] Or, **a wicked mouth and a deceitful mouth have they opened against me**, &c. Such are the circumstances under which the Psalmist pleads to God for succour—wicked men have spoken, and speak, lies and slander, for which there is no manner of foundation.

3, 4. *They compassed me*, &c.] "Their malice is provoked without a cause: love, forbearance, good will, cannot move them." Cf. Ps. xxxv. 12, &c.

but I give myself unto prayer] Heb. "but I prayer," *i.e.* "nought but prayer," as Ps. cxx. 7, Heb. "but I peace," *i.e.* "but I am wholly peace;" Ps. cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing;" Heb. "willingnesses," *i. e.* "willing in a superlative degree," &c. The mixture of tenses may be significant in these early verses. The hatred of the Psalmist's foes is

5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let [1]Satan stand at his right hand.

7 When he shall be judged, let him [†] be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

8 Let his days be few; *and* [a]let another take his [1]office.

9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek *their bread* also out of their desolate places.

11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

13 Let his posterity be cut off; *and* in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

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not of to-day or of yesterday, but of old, and of years past.

6. *Set thou a wicked man*, &c.] "Set thou a wicked man over him, to judge him (see next verse), according to his wickedness." In Lev. xxvi. 16, consumption, fever, and a burning ague, are set over the disobedient people, like savage rulers or taskmasters, to vex them. At this verse the singular is substituted for the plural, and one enemy singled out for special rebuke, as in Ps. lv 13: see also xxxv. 11, &c., xli. 5, &c.: or, the hostile crew is idealized and treated as abstract hostility and wickedness.

Tholuck remarks that no passion is discernible in these dreadful imprecations. Rather a calm tranquil spirit, as if the chastisement were plainly deserved, and would surely come. And come assuredly it did, he adds, according to the Psalmist's confident expectations (*v.* 31), and according to God's eternal laws of government, by which chastisement follows crime. By His appointment a death without hope lights commonly upon the unrepentant and utterly depraved; their children are vagabonds and beg; their posterity are cut off, and their name forgotten. The curse was realized, though we need not say that David foresaw its realization, in the fate of Judas. He was condemned of God (Matt. xxvi. 24): his prayer, if he prayed, was despair: his life was cut off (*v.* 8) in the midst of his days: and his office (Acts i. 16, 20) another took. So that S. Peter reasonably quotes this psalm as illustrated, at the very least, and its teaching exemplified, by the history of Judas.

let Satan, &c.] Or, rather, see the margin, "Let an adversary stand at his right hand and accuse him; and let him be condemned." The phrase is taken from courts of justice; the arch-accuser, in Zech. iii. 1, stands at the right hand of the accused. The places in Job, i. 6, 9, ii. 1—7, do not seem parallel to this. Satan with the article, means there, specifically, the accuser; here generally an accuser or adversary, as in 1 S. xxix. 4, 2 S. xix. 22; 1 K. xi. 14, 23.

7. *When he shall be judged*, &c.] "When he is tried (*v.* 6), and judged in cause with another, may he go forth (see the marginal rendering) out of the hall of judgment a criminal convicted: and may his prayer to his judge for pardon and mitigation of punishment augment his guilt: or, rather, *may his prayer* to God (Isai. i. 15; Prov. xv. 8, xxviii. 9) be *sin*."

8. *Let his days*, &c.] Ps. lv. 23.

his office] LXX. τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ: whence the expression in Acts i. 20. The Syr. renders the word (see Isai. xv. 7) "savings," "treasure."

10. *Let his children be continually vagabonds*] As Cain, Gen. iv. 12: *and beg* (their bread), "cast out and banished from their (lit. **ruins**) ruined homes."

11. *Let the extortioner*, &c.] "Let the usurer, according to his wont, *catch*, or lay his net upon, all his property; and let strangers in blood and affection, or, rather (Deut. xxviii. 43, 44), barbarians and foreigners, *spoil* his goods, the fruit of his industry and toil." Kay remarks that the history of the Jews, from the days of Claudian downwards, is a comment upon these words.

12. *none to extend*, &c.] See Ps. xxxvi. 10; Neh. ix. 30, 31. "Let no one, his baseness ascertained, continue to him, or lengthen out, kindness begun."

13. *Let his posterity*, &c.] "Let his sons and daughters, after suffering hunger, want, and all misery (*v.* 10), be cut off; and in the next generation, that is, the generation following that of his sons and daughters who are not, let his name and their name be forgotten."

14. *Let the iniquity*, &c.] "Let the sin of his forefathers be remembered before God and visited upon him, according to the word in Exod. xx. 5: and let not his mother's sin be forgotten, but recollected and imputed."

15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come †into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

† Heb. *within him.*

19 Let it be unto him as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

20 *Let* this *be* the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy *is* good, deliver thou me.

22 For I *am* poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

25 I became also a reproach unto them: *when* they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

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15. *Let them be*, &c.] "Let the sins of father, mother, forefathers, be present to the memory of God, so that He may think of them always, and cut off the remembrance of the whole race before Him:" Pss. xxxiv. 16, xc. 8.

16. *Because that...but persecuted*, &c.] More literally, "but persecuted the poor and needy man, yea, the broken-hearted (Kay) man, and that to put him to death." The Heb. seems by the conjugation employed, Pilel instead of Hiphil, to imply by the last words more than death simple. Stier remarks upon this verse,—that it had (surely) its most signal fulfilment when the people arose and constrained Pilate to crucify the Man of sorrows. The people that then condemned Him were cut off in the next generation,—forty years after the crucifixion the destruction came,—their house was left desolate, their temple destroyed, and the residue became wanderers and beggars over the whole earth; Matt. xxiii. 32—36, xxvii. 25.

17. *As he loved cursing*, &c.] Possibly *vv.* 17, 18 describe as fact what *v.* 19 amplifies in a wish, or prayer. "He loved cursing, and it loved him in return, and came to him: he delighted not in blessing, and it was far from him. He clothed himself with cursing as with a garment, and it permeated his inmost parts as water, as the refreshing oil with which the body is anointed finds a way into marrow and bones." The images are familiar; the daily dress, the water that permeates daily every part of the body, the oil used daily for nourishment (Ps. civ. 15) and gladness (Ps. xxiii. 5). In the wish that follows (*v.* 19), the mantle, A.V. *garment*, which is always worn, and the girdle or belt with which the accursed one is always girded, are substituted, apparently, for more general terms.

20. *Let this be the reward*, &c.] Or, rather, **This is the reward**, or **wages of mine adversaries**, which they have earned by their crimes. The word used in *v.* 6 is used again here and in *v.* 29.

21. *But do thou*, &c.] Heb. "Do Thou with me," *i. e.* "Take part with me, and aid me, according to Thy mercy." Cf. 1 S. xiv. 6, 45, and Ps. lxxxvi. 17, Heb.: or, the meaning perhaps is, "Do Thou for me, according to Thy name and fame (Jer. xiv. 7), mercy and right." The full expression seems to occur in Ps. cxix. 65.

O GOD the Lord] "O Jehovah Adonai." Pss. lxviii. 20, cxl. 7, cxli. 8, &c. The twofold name of God, and the pronoun "Thou," Heb., shew the intensity of the appeal.

23. *I am gone*, &c.] See Ps. cii. 11. "I pass away like the shadow when it lengthens and (soon) disappears: as the locust is tossed up and down, or, rather, tossed away by the wind and carried into the sea (Exod. x. 19; Joel ii. 20), so I, weak, powerless, and at the mercy of my foes, am shaken off and tossed far away, as crumb from napkin (Hupf.), from the earth and life." See similar images, Job xxxviii. 13; Neh. v. 13. The LXX. render, "I have been shaken off, far away, as the locusts."

24. *through fasting*, &c.] Ps. xxxv. 13. *Fasting*, an indication of sorrow for sin, humiliation, and submission.

faileth of fatness] *i. e.* "faileth, or falls away through lack of fatness:" or, possibly, "from lack of oil." So Jer., LXX., Symm.

25. *I became also a reproach*, &c.] "I that merited not (*vv.* 4, 5) such reproach became," &c.

shaked their heads] Pss. xxii. 7, xliv. 14; Matt. xxvii. 39.

26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

27 That they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it.

28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save *him* †from those that condemn his soul.

† Heb. *from the judges of his soul.*

PSALM CX.

1 *The kingdom,* 4 *the priesthood,* 5 *the conquest,* 7 *and the passion of Christ.*

A Psalm of David.

THE [a]LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

[a] Matt. 22. 44. Mark 12. 36. Luke 20. 42. Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Heb. 1. 13.

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27. *that this is thy hand,* &c.] "This help which I ask for and which Thou wilt send." The Psalmist desires that God's chastisement may light upon his foes to justify His ways to man, and exhibit Him as an avenger of His friends.

28. *when they arise,* &c.] "When they arise in battle;" or, rather, "They have risen up in battle against me, and are ashamed, but Thy servant rejoices." The plural is now substituted for the singular. See *vv.* 2—5.

thy servant] Ps. lxix. 17.

29, 30. *Let mine adversaries,* &c.] The prayer (*v.* 26) is now perhaps, in conclusion, changed into a confident expectation: "Mine adversaries shall," &c.

31. *at the right hand,* &c.] As a shield and defence: Pss. xvi. 8, cx. 5, cxxi. 5, cxlii. 4.

PSALM CX.

A mighty Prince, sitting at the right hand of God, and the Associate of His power, wages a fearful war against the enemies of both. He is accompanied to battle by an innumerable host of comrade warriors (*v.* 3), clad in the vestments of holiness, as befits the followers of a Priest. For He is a Priest (*v.* 4) after the order of Melchizedek; not for a brief life, as priests under the law, but for ever. The Psalmist foretells to this incomparable Captain, through the aid of Jehovah, a victory over His enemies (*v.* 5), over princes and peoples, everywhere, opposed to Him (*v.* 6); and portrays His vigour in the fight, and perseverance, till no enemy remains.

v. 1 describes the Psalmist's vision of Jehovah speaking to His Son: in *vv.* 2, 3, 4, 5 he addresses his speech directly to the Mighty One addressed in *v.* 1 by Jehovah Himself: in *vv.* 6 and 7 he dwells upon the circumstances of the day of conflict, and the demeanour, in and after it, of the Hero Messiah.

The psalm has always been interpreted of Messiah in the Jewish Church. It is interpreted of Messiah by Christ Himself in Matt. xxii. 41, &c.; Mark xii. 35. The Pharisees, against whose notions of Messiah He uses it, do not dispute the interpretation (see also Luke xx. 41 and Matt. xxvi. 64). In the Christian Church no ancient Scripture is more frequently quoted in proof that Christ is Messiah, and in illustration of His Offices (Acts ii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Eph. i. 20; Heb. i. 3, v. 6, vii. 17—23, &c.). Justin Martyr ('Apol. 1.' c. 60) applies the words of *vv.* 1—3 to the ascension of Christ, and the spread of His kingdom; and the words of *v.* 2 to the mighty victorious teaching of the Apostles. In the dialogue with Trypho, p. 202, ed. Thirl., he says that the Messianic is the only tolerable explanation of it: and similarly in other places, pp. 211, 253, &c. Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Eusebius, Chrysostom, Cyril, Theodoret, &c. give similar testimony.

The explanations of those who decline the Messianic interpretation are unnatural. The Prince who sits at Jehovah's right hand (*v.* 1) (Ewald, Hupfeld, Herder, &c.) is David: but no Scripture justifies the application of the phrase, *Sit at My right hand,* in that verse to a man. The priest addressed in *v.* 4 (Hitzig, &c.) is Jonathan (1 Macc. x. 21), or Alexander Jannæus, or Simon (1 Macc. xiv. 41), and the words *for ever* mean for his whole life. But the solemn words which introduce the mention of the priesthood, uttered by God Himself, exclude the commonplace explanation. They exclude, too, the notion that the word *priest* can be applied to the Prince Messiah in any sense except the most exact. It is impossible to read the psalm without feeling that it is dealing with a theme above that of David or Jonathan; its intense dignity and solemnity become exaggeration and bombast if interpreted of any *man.*

It is allowed that it is of the age of David. Its tone, language, spirit, and contents bear out the almost universal tradition that David wrote it. Most of the Messianic psalms of David mix up Messianic circumstances with incidents of the king's own life: but Ps. ii. and his last words (2 S. xxiii. 3, 4) shew, that such

2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

3 Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness [1]from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

4 The LORD hath sworn, and will

[1] Or, *more than the womb of the morning: thou shalt have, &c.*

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a separation in vision, as in this psalm, by the king was possible. In this poem he describes without any admixture, as far as we can see, of circumstances present, the victory of Messiah over the world of evil. The image of a warrior destroying his foes may seem a strange representation of the establishment upon earth of Christ's spiritual dominion. But David described Messiah's victory over His enemies by images familiar to him as a warrior; so Ezekiel drew his images out of the forms of the Assyrian world. Still the prophecy embodies certain features which suggest, or easily fall in with, the hypothesis, that the images in it are symbolical: *e.g.* the description (*v.* 4) of Messiah as Priest; of His warrior comrades, who are priests (*v.* 3): and the hint (*v.* 7) of His weariness and lowliness. The conflict described in the psalm (*v.* 3, &c.) is going on always: and Messiah to this day occupies His seat, as in *v.* 1.

1. *The LORD said*, &c.] Jehovah spake in vision (Heb. נאם: Matt. xxii. 43, "David ἐν πνεύματι calleth Him," &c.) to the Lord of the Psalmist, and bade Him sit at His right hand.

my Lord] "If David, the king and prophet, calls Christ his Lord and Master, then is He not a mere man, as the Jews madly maintain, but God and Lord; and David His creature and servant:" is the comment of Theodoret upon *v.* 1.

at my right hand] In the seat of chief honour, and as the associate of power. See 1 K. ii. 19; Mark xiv. 62; Matt. xx. 21. The expression in full (as Schnurrer remarks) is "Sit on My throne at My right hand." It is derived from the custom of a king placing his son upon the throne with him, 1 K. i. 43—48.

until, &c.] This does not imply that the seat at God's right hand will be vacated when His enemies are subdued (but see 1 Cor. xv. 24—28; Acts. ii. 33, &c.).

thy footstool] An expression derived from the custom of placing the foot upon the necks of the vanquished: Josh. x. 24, 25.

2. *The LORD*, &c.] Jehovah shall send forth out of Zion an irresistible force: and, as He gives the sceptre of empire, will say to Him that wields it, "Rule Thou in the midst," &c.

the rod of thy strength] *i.e.* the staff or sceptre of power, as in Jer. xlviii. 17; Ezek. xix. 12 (Heb.). The centre of the unparalleled dominion is Zion (see Ps. ii. 6; Isai. ii. 3. Zion used here, as often, for Jerusalem): its limits are undefined (compare Pss. ii., lxxii.; Zech. ix. 10). The Prince is invited in the words *Rule Thou*, &c. to assume dominion, whilst His enemies are as yet (apparently) unsubdued. "He gives us," says Luther, "no other mark as to the spot in which Christ is to reign, but this: *In the midst of Thine enemies.*"

3. *Thy people shall be willing*, &c.] The meaning is, "Thy people shall be willing (Heb. "willingnesses," or "free offerings," plural of excellence) in the day of Thy prowess: in robes of holiness." A description of the preparation for the conflict. There is no hesitation: it is no mercenary army (Judges v. 2, 9): it follows the King from love: it is clad in the robes of holiness, as the singers in 2 Chron. xx. 21 (see the Note there, and Apoc. xix. 14): as befits the ministers of a holy service (Ps. xxix. 2): as becomes the soldiers of a Priest-king. After the word *holiness* a full stop, or colon.

from the womb, &c.] Lit. "From the womb of the morning (falls) to Thee the dew of Thy youth."—As the dew of early morning, in *multitude*, and *sudden*, *unexpected*, *marvellous* appearance, (comes) an unnumbered troop of "*Thy youthful followers.*" The dew is imaged as born out of the womb of morning. In 2 S. xvii. 11, 12, the fall of the dew furnishes an image of the *silence* and *suddenness* with which an army lights upon the enemy: in Mic. v. 7, it is the image of a *miraculous presence* towards which man contributes nothing: in Job xxxviii. 8, see too *vv.* 28, &c., the sea in the beginning issues *out of the womb*. The image in the text seems to combine these various figures. Others interpret differently: "As the dew of early morning, abundant, refreshing, spreading far and wide, miraculous, is the might *of Thy perpetual youth.*"

4. *The LORD hath sworn*, &c.] The preface to this verse, "Jehovah hath sworn," &c. and the choice of an example of the union of king and priest from so hoar an antiquity, and of such marked and peculiar significance, seem to shew that the union is absolutely singular. The kings of Israel did undoubtedly sometimes offer sacrifice (1 S. xiii. 9; 2 S. vi. 17; 1 K. viii. 5), and bless the people (2 S. vi. 18). David also on one occasion wore the priestly ephod (2 S. vi. 14). Yet the cases of Saul, Uzziah, &c. (1 S. xiii. 12, 13; 2 Chro. xxvi. 18—20: see also Num. xvi. 40) seem to shew conclusively, that they could not officiate as priests, and that the words, *Thou art a priest for ever*, could not

5–6. not repent, [b]Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over [1] many countries.

7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

PSALM CXI.

1 *The psalmist by his example inciteth others to praise God for his glorious,* 5 *and gracious works.* 10 *The fear of God breedeth true wisdom.*

[1] PRAISE ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with *my* whole

[1] Heb. *Hallelujah.*

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apply, even in the first instance, to David. Melchizedek (Gen. xiv. 18, &c.), King of Salem, and Priest of the Most High God, gave significant gifts to Abraham, spake words of deep mysterious import, and blessed him! Messiah is a Priest after the likeness (Heb. vii. 15, 16), after the image, that is, of an inspired King, a High Priest, of the heathen, as well as of the Jews: *for ever*, not, as the priests under the law, for a brief period. That Melchizedek was priest in a full sense of the word seems evident from his exercising an office (as it would seem) above that of Abraham (see Heb. vii. 4, 6, 7; Zech. vi. 9—15).

5. *the Lord*] Adonai, *i.e.* Jehovah. Some MSS. of Kenn. and De Rossi read יהוה. It seems natural to consider *v.* 5 a continuation of the Psalmist's address to Messiah, rather than a somewhat abrupt address to Jehovah Himself, inserted between the address to Messiah (*v.* 4) and the meditation upon His deeds (*v.* 6). The latter verse and *v.* 7 cannot possibly apply to any but Messiah. In *v.* 1, Messiah is seated at Jehovah's right hand as the Associate of His power: in this verse, by a different figure (Pss. xvi. 8, cix. 31, cxxi. 5), Jehovah is portrayed as coming down from heaven and assisting Messiah in the conflict, at His right hand. With this *v.* 5 the address to Messiah ends: the two next *vv.* (6 and 7) are the meditations of the Psalmist upon the august scene before his eyes. The transition in *vv.* 5, 6, from the address to Messiah by the Psalmist to a meditation upon and admiration of His deeds is eminently poetical and graphic. The transitions in Ps. ii. are similar.

6. *He shall fill the places*, &c.] Lit. "He is full of bodies," &c. or "'Tis full of bodies," &c. *i.e.* "He shall exercise a complete authority among His foes; He shall cover the field of battle (*v.* 3) with the slain; He shall smite the head of His enemies (Ps. lxviii. 21) over all lands." It is possible that the Hebrew words mention the name of one land, or rather of one city, "Rabbah," of the Ammonites, whose head should be smitten (Kay quotes Josh. xi. 5—10; Hab. iii. 13, 14); but the general sense is not much altered by this rendering. The triumphs of Messiah are symbolized by figures taken from ordinary wars; it may be from a particular contemporary war.

7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way*] Not waiting for repose or princely refreshment: and He shall lift up His head, recruited (see Judg. xv. 18), and follow till no enemy remain. The conflict, as of one day, is described: Messiah defeats and destroys His foes, and stays not for weariness or delicacy till all is achieved.

There is in the original some admixture of tenses (*vv.* 2, 4, 5, 6, 7), about which, perhaps, too many words are wasted. The events seem future: sometimes so expressed, sometimes described as accomplished; according to a common prophetical figure.

Luther remarks on this psalm that it is worthy to be set in a frame of gold and diamonds; so full it is, he says, of excellent Christian thought and Divine instruction; and of all the psalms the very crown and chief. The fifth verse in particular, he says, is like a rich copious spring, or inexhaustible mine, from which flow Christian instruction and wisdom, faith, hope, and confidence, the like to which no other Scripture supplies.

PSALM CXI.

A psalm commemorating God's mercies in brief sententious couplets, *vv.* 1, 2, 3—8, or triplets, *vv.* 9, 10, for the most part of three words. The nurture of the people in the desert, the gift of Canaan, the deliverance out of Egypt, seem to be hinted at, *vv.* 4, 5, 6; and His power, justice, truth, which are the delight and everlasting profit of His servants, are earnestly portrayed.

The psalm consists of ten verses and twenty-two versicles; marked in succession by the letters of the alphabet. It is one of the ten psalms which begin with Hallelujah. The others are cvi., cxii., cxiii., cxxxv., cxlvi.—cl. Six of these psalms, cxiii., cxiv., cxvi., cxvii., cxxxv., cxlvi., according to the Talmud, had a special name, and were used at the great festivals. Pss. cxiii., cxiv., were sung in families on the night of the Passover, before the emptying of the second cup: Pss. cxv.—cxviii. after the celebration and the fourth cup. Many commentators suppose that Pss. cxi., cxii. were used as a preface to the above-named solemn hymns.

The two psalms, cxi. and cxii., resemble one another in construction, alphabetical arrangement, and general tone and manner.

heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation.

2 The works of the LORD *are* great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

3 His work *is* honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion.

5 He hath given †meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

† Heb. *prey.*

6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The works of his hands *are* verity and judgment; all his commandments *are* sure.

8 They †stand fast for ever and ever, *and are* done in truth and uprightness.

† Heb. are *stablished.*

9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend *is* his name.

10 [a]The fear of the LORD *is* the

[a] Job 28. 28. Prov. 1. 7. & 9. 10. Ecclus. 1. 16.

They are connected in this way: Ps. cxi. sets forth the greatness, mercy, and righteousness of God: Ps. cxii. the reflection of these attributes in the greatness, *v.* 2, mercy, *v.* 5, and righteousness, *vv.* 4, 9, of His chosen. The correspondence of purpose in the two psalms is important to the right appreciation of some difficulties connected with the latter psalm. The contents are of so general a nature that they give no clue to the author, nor to their date.

1. *in the assembly*, &c.] *The upright*, generally, are the people of Israel; see Num. xxiii. 10, where the word rendered *righteous* is the word here used. *The assembly* represents a smaller collection of upright ones than *the congregation;* and the meaning is, I will praise Thee secretly and openly; see Ps. cvii. 32. The Prayer-Book Version expresses this sense, "secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation."

2. *The works of the LORD*, &c.] The commencement of the Song: the works of Jehovah for His people are great, and far above any other works.

sought out, &c.] "Searched into," and "studied," and thus "fully understood" to be inimitably great, by all those that delight in them (see Ps. cxix. 45, 94, 155; so Hupfeld and others). Or, probably, "exquisitely excellent," and "fully satisfying" all those that delight in them; *i.e.* excellent, precious, incomparable, in the judgment of those who best understand them—His faithful worshippers: see Ps. cxii. 1.

3. *His work*] Or, "His working." *His righteousness*," *i.e.* "His holiness, uprightness, justice;" each infinite in degree.

4. *He hath made*, &c.] Rather, "He hath got Him a remembrance for His wonderful deeds," *i.e.* "He has done such wonderful deeds, that a remembrance of them abides for ever:" see Ps. lxxviii. 3, 4; Num. xvi. 40; Josh. iv. 6, 7. The connexion between the first and second versicle is given by the Prayer-Book paraphrase: "The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done His marvellous works that they ought to be had in remembrance." See Exod. xxxiv. 6; also 2 Chro. xxx. 9.

5. *He hath given*, &c.] The allusion is, in the first instance, to His feeding of His people in the Waste; in the next place, to His support, always, in similar exigencies, of His faithful ones (Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10): "He gave, and gives, meat (marg. prey, *i.e.* taken by wild beasts) to His faithful ones: He remembers always, as in the Waste He remembered, His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for a thousand generations." Gen. xv.

6. *He hath shewed*, &c.] "He shewed in deed His power, which He exerted in behalf of His people, by giving them the heritage of the heathen."

7. *The works*, &c.] "All that He does, always, is justice absolute, and flows from an absolute truthfulness. All His commandments are fixed, firm, effectual, everlasting: and based on His eternal truth and equity." Pss. xix. 9, xciii. 5.

8. *They stand fast*, &c.] Are the Works or the Commandments intended? The Commandments were mentioned last, and the words are naturally referable to them; and being, as above described, sure, effectual, and, in a sense, themselves *works*, they may easily be coupled with His works.

9. *He sent redemption*, &c.] "He redeemed His people out of Egyptian bondage, and still redeems: He commanded (*i.e.* made authoritatively, Ps. cxxxiii. 3) a covenant on Sinai with them, and keeps it for evermore."

his name] *i.e.* Himself, as displayed by His deeds and words (Pss. viii. 1, xcix. 3), is holy, and deeply to be feared.

10. *The fear of*, &c.] See the places noted in the margin.

beginning of wisdom: [1] a good understanding have all they [†] that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever.

PSALM CXII.

1 *Godliness hath the promises of this life,* 4 *and of the life to come.* 10 *The prosperity of the godly shall be an eyesore to the wicked.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Blessed *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* delighteth greatly in his commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: *he is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

5 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with † discretion.

† Heb. *judgment*

6 Surely he shall not be moved for

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the beginning] *i.e.* the principal part. In Prov. iv. 7 the word here employed is rendered *principal thing* in the A.V. See Pss. lxxviii. 51; cv. 36, *the chief* (Heb. beginning) *of all their strength*.

a good understanding, &c.] See Prov. xiii. 15. Crowning conclusion. The fear of Jehovah is the choicest wisdom: a true prudence, to guide their life, have they who obey Him!

his praise] *i.e.* Jehovah's praise, Whose Name has been the theme of the psalm, endures for ever.

PSALM CXII.

The excellence of piety and its reward (see cxi. 10) to distant generations and to a man's self and family is sung in an alphabetical hymn resembling the last. The seed of the righteous is mighty in the earth, *v.* 2; wealth and prosperity follow his steps, *v.* 3; light in darkness, *v.* 4; a fearless heart in trouble, *v.* 7; discretion and judgment in all his affairs, *v.* 5: he is gracious, compassionate, righteous, merciful, liberal, considerate, *vv.* 4, 5, 9. At his prosperity the wicked are confounded; they gnash with their teeth and perish, *v.* 10.

The inscription in the Vulg. (reversionis, Aggæi et Zachariæ) refers the psalm to the period of the return from exile. Compare Pss. i. and xv.

2. *His seed*, &c.] A blessing of the Old Covenant! The seed of the righteous attains to opulence, and to heroic fame, which commonly seem the meed of violence and ambition. The same phrase is used of Nimrod, Gen. x. 8; a similar one, Ruth ii. 1, of Boaz; and, 1 S. ix. 1, of Kish.

3. *Wealth and riches*, &c.] See Prov. iii. 16, viii. 18, &c.

his righteousness, &c.] Righteousness, some say, is put for its fruit, that is, prosperity or opulence, as indicated in the verse preceding. Similarly in Ezek. xviii. 20; Hos. x. 13. But, probably, the verse is an echo (twice repeated, see *v.* 9) of Ps. cxi. 3. The righteousness of God remains the same for ever: in a sense man's righteousness, as a reflexion of the Divine, his uprightness, justice, holiness, which are from God, remain for ever! "A good man," says Geier, "devotes himself to God, not for a day only but for life: nay, when brief life is over, his devotion to his purpose and its reward do not end!"

4. *Unto the upright*, &c.] Calamity is imaged by darkness, and escape from it by light. See Isai. ix. 1, 2. lviii. 10; Micah vii. 8. When a righteous man is whelmed, apparently, in hopeless calamity, a light, of which no one dreamed, suddenly arises. See Ps. xcvii. 11. The words which follow, *he is gracious, full of compassion, and righteous*, are applied by some to Jehovah, of Whom two of them are the undoubted descriptive epithets, Pss. lxxviii. 38, cxi. 4; by others, to the upright man, of whom the verse is speaking, and whose graciousness and compassion are further insisted upon in the verse following. But if these godlike characteristics are applied to a man, they must be so applied with a tacit reference to Him from Whose image they are drawn. See Luke vi. 36; Matt. v. 45, 48. The epithet "righteous" is not often applied to God: but, in this psalm, *v.* 6, and commonly, to a man: see Ps. i. 5, 6.

5. *A good man*, &c.] The word rendered "good" means, rather, "happy" or "happiness," here, as in Isai. iii. 10; Jer. xliv. 17. The phrase is altered to preserve the alphabetical arrangement, but the import is similar to that of *v.* 1, **Happy is the man**, or, "**It is well with the man** that sheweth favour or kindness, and lendeth," &c. Prov. xiv. 21.

he will guide his affairs, &c.] The meaning may be, "he will conduct," or, "he conducts his affairs (successfully) in judgment;" that is, "he will conduct his affairs successfully against his enemies, and come out of the court of judgment unspotted and uninjured." See Ps. cxxvii. 5. The next verse (6) continues the same idea.

6. *Surely*, &c.] "As the earth is fixed for

ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

8 His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid, until he see *his desire* upon his enemies.

9 [a] He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

a 2 Cor. 9. 9.

PSALM CXIII.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his excellency,* 6 *for his mercy.*

[1] PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

2 [a] Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.

3 [b] From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD's name *is* to be praised.

4 The LORD *is* high above all nations, *and* his glory above the heavens.

5 Who *is* like unto the LORD our God, who [1] dwelleth on high,

1 Heb. Hallelujah. a Dan. 2. 20. b Mal. 1. 11. 1 Heb. exalteth himself to dwell.

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ever (Ps. civ. 5) on its eternal bases—so this man shall never be moved. His prosperity in life, and his blessing, which abides for ever, shall be an everlasting memorial of God's favour:" Prov. x. 7; see also Pss. xxi. 7, xxx. 6, &c.

7. *He shall not*, &c.] "He shall not be alarmed by tidings of evil to himself or his friends (1 S. iv. 19; 2 K. xix. 6), for his heart is full of trust in God, and fixed and firm." Isai. xxvi. 3.

8. *until he see*, &c.] See Ps. liv. 7, "Till he look upon," *i.e.* with triumph.

9. *He hath dispersed*, &c.] Prov. xi. 24. An abundant scattering of good is intimated.
his righteousness, &c.] See *v.* 3.
his horn] See Pss. lxxv. 4, 5, lxxxix. 17.

10. *The wicked*, &c.] "The wicked see the prosperity, which they desire to pass away, increase more and more: and they with their wicked desires (Prov. x. 24) gnash their teeth (Pss. xxxv. 16, xxxvii. 12), melt away (Ps. lxviii. 2), and perish."

PSALM CXIII.

A psalm of praise, in three parts: *vv.* 1—3 contain the exhortation to praise; *vv.* 4—6 a picture of Jehovah's glory; *vv.* 7—9 a picture of His condescension to man, and miracles of providential mercy.

The psalm is appointed for the service of our church on Easter Day; probably on account of the use of it mentioned above; see Ps. cxi. The date is uncertain; the conclusion (*v.* 9) would suggest, as its occasion, the conversion, through God's interposition, of some barren, *homeless* woman (Exod. i. 21; 2 S. vii. 11, 27) into a mother of sons.

1. *Praise ye*, &c.] See Pss. cxxxv. 1. xxix. 1.
O ye servants, &c.] Pss., lxix. 36, xxxiv. 22, cxxxvi. 22, &c. All faithful Israelites are intended: if the Levites only had been meant, some word of explanation (Pss. cxxxiv. 1. cxxxv. 2) would have been added. It is not without a reason that praise is given to Jehovah's *name*—a name associated with Deeds and Words, such as no other people could boast. See Pss. cii. 15, 21, cxv. 1, &c.

4. *above the heavens*, &c.] Rather. "in and over" the heavens in which He dwells (Pss. lvii. 3, 5, ciii. 19), which declare His glory (Ps. xix. 1), and in which His strong hero-angels do His bidding (Ps. ciii. 20, 21).

5, 6. *who dwelleth*, &c.] A parallelism of phrase is noticeable in the original, which the A. V. does not preserve.

1. Who is like unto Jehovah our God?
2. Who sits throned on high;
3. Who casts looks so low;
4. In the heavens and the earth?

Some commentators (Hengsten, Bunsen, Delitzsch, &c.) refer to Deut. iii. 24, and connect the first and last of these versicles, "Who is like unto Jehovah our God, in the heavens and the earth, who sits throned on high, who casts," &c.: and it is an argument in favour of this connexion that the versicles inserted between 1 and 4 are peculiar in construction, and easily separable from what precedes and follows. Others (Hupfeld, &c.) render, "Who is like unto Jehovah our God, Who sits high, and looks low, (and sees) all things in the heavens and the earth?" as if the general phrase "sees" were included in the special one, "looks down." But the image of God looking down from His throne above the heavens into the heavens (Meier, &c.) does not seem scriptural; the heavens are His throne, and the earth His footstool, Isai. lxvi. 1. With the general sentiment compare Ps. viii. 3, 4: Isai. lvii. 15.

6 Who humbleth *himself* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and in the earth!

7 [c] He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;

8 That he may set *him* with princes, *even* with the princes of his people.

9 He maketh the barren woman † to keep house, *and to be* a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXIV.

An exhortation, by the example of the dumb creatures, to fear God in his church.

WHEN [a] Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;

2 Judah was his sanctuary, *and* Israel his dominion.

3 [b] The sea saw *it*, and fled: [c] Jordan was driven back.

4 The mountains skipped like rams, *and* the little hills like lambs.

5 What *ailed* thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

6 Ye mountains, *that* ye skipped like rams; *and* ye little hills, like lambs?

7 Tremble, thou earth, at the pre-

[c] 1 Sam. 2. 8. Ps. 107. 41.
† Heb. *to dwell in an house.*
[a] Exod. 13. 3.
[b] Exod. 14. 21.
[c] Josh. 3. 13.

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7. *He raiseth up*, &c.] The Song of Hannah (1 S. ii. 8) is copied almost word for word. Again, *v.* 9 of the psalm recalls *v.* 5 of the song. Compare the Song of Mary, Luke i. 46, 48, &c.

8. *with the princes of his people*] Not only equal to the princes of the earth, but to the princes of His people chosen of God.

9. *He maketh*, &c.] "He maketh a barren, houseless woman to keep house. (Lo!) a joyful mother of those sons." See the places in the introduction, from Exod. and Sam., which intimate that *a house* in Heb. implies children: without which it is cheerless, and without which the wife has no secure place. A glance in the last versicle is given of the happy mother in her home with her sons.

Olshausen, J. says that the psalm is unfinished, and ends unexpectedly. But not so, if *v.* 9 is its point, and the occasion such as imagined in the introduction.

PSALM CXIV.

A psalm recounting God's miracles in separating His chosen people, and leading them out of Egypt into Canaan.

1. *When Israel*, &c.] *Israel*, and *the house of Jacob*, in this verse are put naturally for the people: *Judah* and *Israel*, *v.* 2, seem put for places; the first for the place in which Jehovah abode (see Exod. xv. 17), the second for the kingdom in which He reigned. So that the meaning is, "When Israel and the house of Jacob came out of Egypt, Judah was His holy habitation, and Israel His dominion." See Ps. lxxviii. 68, 71.

a people of strange language] See Gen. xlii. 23; Ps. lxxxi. 5; also Isai. xxxiii. 19. The strange language is particularized as the sign of a barbarous, unholy people, contrasted with the holy, separated people.

2. *his dominion*] Heb. "His kingdoms," as if He had none other. The idea here prominent, that God, by His miracles in Exodus, purchased for Himself an inheritance, is common in Scripture (Exod. xix. 4, 5, 6; Deut. iv. 20; 1 K. viii. 51), and a frequent topic with which the prophets commence their exhortations. No doubt can exist Whose sanctuary and dominion is intended; the name is (see Ps. lxxxvii. 1) reserved to *v.* 7, where it is uttered exultingly, after the enumeration of His Deeds for His chosen.

3. *The sea saw it*, &c.] Heb. "The sea saw, and fled." The Red Sea and river Jordan are described as foes that fled at the presence of a mightier foe. The Hebrew does not express Whom the sea saw. It saw Him Whose chiding in the beginning (Ps. civ. 7) hurried into their appointed places the waters of the great deep. The passage of the Red Sea, and crossing of Jordan, are specified, as the beginning and end of the miraculous transit. Between them (*v.* 4) are the miracles (Exod. xix. 18) which accompanied the giving of the law. Similar figures occur Pss. xviii. 7, 8, 15, xxix. 6, lxviii. 8; Judg. v. 4.

5. *What ailed*, &c.] Similar addresses in Isai. xxiii. 7 and Ps. lxviii. 16. The Psalmist sees the miracles which he recounts; the sea dividing, Jordan retreating (see Dean Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' Vol. I. p. 229), mountain and hill shaking, at the presence of God; and draws the conclusion which is the crowning point of the psalm, that earth and all within it, river, mountain, sea, had cause for trembling and quaking at His presence, Who is the mighty Lord (Adon); the true God; (Eloah-Jacob); Who made the world and did these wonders, and still can do, for His chosen.

7. *Tremble, thou earth*, &c.] "Tremble as in the pangs of labour." Pss. lxxvii. 16, xxix. 9.

sence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

[d] Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11.

8 [d] Which turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

PSALM CXV.

1 *Because God is truly glorious,* 4 *and idols are vanity,* 9 *he exhorteth to confidence in God.* 12 *God is to be blessed for his blessings.*

NOT unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.

2 Wherefore should the heathen say, [a] Where *is* now their God?

3 [b] But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

[a] Psal. 42. 10. & 79. 10.
[b] Psal. 135. 6.

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8. *Which turned*, &c.] The "rock" of Horeb; Exod. xvii. 6: again the "flint" or "rock" of Kadesh; Deut. viii. 15; Num. xx. 11; Ps. cvii. 35.

The date and author of this psalm are unknown. Its energy and fire; its abruptness, brevity, rapidity; its realization of miracles as acting; the astonishment of the Psalmist at the terror of the sea, the flight of Jordan northwards, the quaking of the mountains and all hills; and the conclusion, that a look of the God of Jacob did these miracles, and turned the rock, not into water, but a pool of water, and the flint into a springing fountain, make up, says Herder (E. P. II. 75), a picture of sublimity to which no parallel can be found. No other language could, with propriety and simplicity, express the images contained in the psalm; and no other history (it is needless to say) could furnish truths for the foundation of it.

The psalm is characterized by considerable art. In the most natural way, and without any apparent design, all the most signal miracles of Exodus are told (*vv.* 3, 4, 8), and the crowning inference obtained, unexpectedly as it were, from a simple, unpretending announcement, *v.* 1. Some commentators (*e. g.* Hengsten) imagine the psalm to have been composed after the exile, when kings and kingdoms conspired against the restored people, to confirm their faith by the record of God's ancient doings. The spirit of the beautiful poem is destroyed by such hypothesis, for which there is no solid foundation. In *v.* 7 there is no reference to the present: rather, the earth shaken and subdued, at the time vividly realized as present, is apostrophized. The characteristics described above, brevity, force, rapidity, intense faith, personification of natural objects, and, we may add, the subject, the miracles of Exodus exclusively, suggest a very early date for the psalm.

The following places in the psalms refer to the miracles of Exodus:—lxviii. 8, 22, lxxiv. 13, lxxvii. 17. 18, lxxviii. 13, 14, 20, 53, cvi. 9—22, cxxxvi. 13—15. Other references in Scripture are Job xxvi. 12; Isai. l. 2, li. 10, &c.; Jer. xxxi. 35; Joel ii. 10; Hab. iii. 8, 15; Nah. i. 4; Neh. ix. 10; to which many more might be added. It is hard to imagine any hypothesis, except the truth of the grand events alluded to, which could have led to such an echo of them throughout all generations of Jews.

PSALM CXV.

A characteristic of this psalm is a frequent allusion to, or quotation of, Isaiah. It may have been written somewhat late in Jewish history (see *v.* 4), and in a time of perplexity and peril. The purport of it is, confidence in God (*vv.* 1—4); contempt of all other gods (*vv.* 4—8); exhortation to trust and hope (*vv.* 9, 10, 11): from a recollection of the past (*vv.* 12—15); and from general thoughts of His doings for man (*vv.* 16—18).

The iterations (*vv.* 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) suggest the idea of a psalm for temple service: with which compare Pss. cxviii. 1—4, cxxxv. 19, 20. cxlviii. 1—4, &c.

In some Heb. MSS. of Kenn. and de Rossi, and in LXX., Vulg., Syr., Ar., &c. this psalm is connected with the preceding. But there is no connection between the subjects of the two psalms: and the symmetry and completeness of Ps. cxiv. are conspicuous. Ewald conjectures that the psalm was sung whilst the sacrifice was offered, and that *vv.* 12—15 were spoken by the priest declaring the acceptance of it; *vv.* 1—11 being sung by the congregation, and again *vv.* 16—18 by the same. It would suit an occasion of thanksgiving, as well as of trial: the tone of the early verses is rather joyous than sad.

1. *Not unto us*, &c.] The request for Divine aid, says Calvin, is rather insinuated than directly preferred; at the same time a confession is made of unworthiness to obtain any favour; which can only flow out of God's mere grace, and from the recollection of His name and fame as a God of Deliverances. See Isai. xlviii. 9; Dan. ix. 18, 19.

2. *Wherefore*, &c.] See Exod. xxxii. 12; Num. xiv. 13, 14; Pss. xlii. 3, 10; lxxix. 10: the last the identical words of the psalm; it is not easy to decide which place is the original: see also Joel ii. 17.

3. *But our God*, &c.] And all the while our God is in Heaven, not as vain idols, close to us, on earth: and does always as it pleaseth Him to do. See Ps. cxxxv. 6.

4 [c] Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:

6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:

7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

8 They that make them are like unto them; *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

9 O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless *us;* he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

13 He will bless them that fear the LORD, *both* small [†] and great.

14 The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

15 Ye *are* blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.

16 The heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the LORD's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

† Heb. *with.*

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4. *Their idols,* &c.] Compare Ps. cxxxv. 15, 18, &c.; also Deut. iv. 28; Isai. xxxvii. 19, xliv. 9—20; Jer. x. 3—5; Wisd. xv. 15. The impotence of idols compared with the living God is a frequent topic with the later prophets. Hengsten. observes that these reiterated comparisons of Jehovah with idols, which may seem needless in this day, were pointed and necessary in the days of Isaiah and Jeremiah; when the whole world, except a small corner of it, was given over to idolatry.

7. *neither speak they*] Or, "mutter any sound," Isai. xxxviii. 14, *through their throat:* the throat the organ of speech; Pss. v. 9, cxlix. 6, see marg.; Isai. lviii. 1, Heb.

8. *They that make them,* &c.] Are, or, are becoming, like to them, *i.e.* nought, powerless, and senseless: Isai. xliv. 9, 10.

9, 10, 11. *O Israel,* &c.] The order of the original in this burden of the song is expressive: "O Israel, trust in the Lord: their help and their shield is He!" We should rather have expected, "Our help and our shield," &c. But the burden, thrice introduced, appears to be a well-known formula of praise. *Their, i.e.* "of all who trust in Him." The verses contain a climax: (1) Israel in general is addressed; (2) the priests or ministers of God's service; (3) the true Israelites; not only chosen out of all people, or out of the chosen people for outward service, but serving God in sincerity of heart: compare Pss. cxviii. 2—4, cxxxv. 19, 20, in which latter place the house of Levi is distinguished from that of Aaron.

13. *both small and great*] A common expression for all, without exception: Jer. vi. 13, xvi. 6, xxxi. 34; Jonah iii. 5; Apoc. xx. 12.

14. *The LORD,* &c.] "Shall add to your numbers, and multiply you and your children, according to His promise," Deut. i. 11: see also 2 S. xxiv. 3; Gen. xxx. 24. Calvin, Luther, &c. interpret, "shall add blessings to you and your children."

15. "Maker of heaven and earth." See Pss. cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8, cxxxiv. 3, &c.

16. *the heaven,* &c.] Heb. "The heavens (are) heavens (*i.e.* a dwelling-place) for the Lord; the earth has He given," &c. A somewhat similar idea, Acts xvii. 24. It may be that the mention of two dwelling-places (*i.e.* heaven and earth) suggests, *v.* 17, the mention of a third, to wit, the land of silence, darkness, and death-shade (compare Ps. xciv. 17), in which none praise Him. The passage seems of very little significance in reference to the doctrine of the soul's immortality as taught in the Psalms. The dead, who have passed away from God's presence (such is the import of the words), and ceased to receive present succour in trouble (see Hezekiah's prayer, Isai. xxxviii. 18, 19, which much resemble *vv.* 17 and 18 of the psalm), and are in darkness and gloom afar from Him, cannot praise Him as we do, and will, who are all but in His glorious presence. Such passages as this *v.* 17 of the psalm, with which compare Pss. vi. 5, xxx. 9, lxxxviii. 10—12, and the places quoted from Isai., simply indicate an ignorance of the state of the soul after death; and cannot be employed, with any appearance of reason, to prove a belief on the part of the Psalmist or of Hezekiah in future extinction of being.

[d] Dan. 2. 20.

18 [d] But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

PSALM CXVI.

1 The psalmist professeth his love and duty to God for his deliverance. 12 He studieth to be thankful.

I LOVE the LORD, because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *him* [†]as long as I live.

† Heb *in my days.*

3 [a] The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell [†] gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

[a] Ps. 18. 5, 6

† Heb. *found me.*

4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 Gracious *is* the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God *is* merciful.

6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, *and* my feet from falling.

9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

10 [b] I believed, therefore have I spoken; I was greatly afflicted:

[b] 2 Co. 4. 13.

PSALM CXVI.

A psalm of thanksgiving of an Israelite for deliverance out of imminent peril, interspersed with repeated promises of vows and offerings to be paid in public to his Deliverer: at what time composed, or in recollection of what critical trial, is uncertain. The Aramaisms (Hupfeld, Delitzsch, &c.) in the psalm, and imitations of other psalms (specially of David), point to a late date. A portion of it is used in the English Church for the service of the Churching of Women; and, in spite of Hupfeld's criticism, seems full of pathos, tenderness, joy that overflows, stedfast faith, and a noble courage; and its use never wearies. In the LXX. and Vulg. the psalm is divided at *v.* 10, and forms two psalms, which in those translations are numbered 114 and 115, each beginning with Hallelujah.

A Jewish tradition refers the psalm to Hezekiah: many resemblances (Kay, &c.) are noticed between it and Isai. xxxvii. and xxxviii. Resemblances to Pss. xviii. and cxviii. are pointed out below.

Vv. 1—4, a description of the sorrow out of which God delivered: *vv.* 5—11, His praise for mercies vouchsafed, and His servant's gratitude; which (*vv.* 12—14) must be shewn in public thankofferings and thanksgivings: continued to the end.

1. *I love the LORD*, &c.] Or, rather, "I love or have loved, *i.e.* with my whole heart." The object of this tender love is not expressed. Cf. Ps. xviii. init.; and with *vv.* 3, 4 cf. *v.* 5 of Ps. cxviii.

3. *The sorrows of death*, &c.] Heb. "The cords of death (see *v.* 16) encircled me; the straits of hell laid hold of me or caught me," Ps. cxix. 143; Exod. xviii. 8 (Heb.). The word rendered "pains" (in the A.V.) occurs only here, in Ps. cxviii. 5, in the sing., and in Lam. i. 3. In the latter place the A.V. has "the straits," which meaning suits also the passage in Ps. cxviii. Instead of *metsorē* (straits), Hupfeld reads *metsodē* (nets), which is not necessary, yet possible.

4. *O LORD, I beseech thee*, &c.] The same expression in the Heb. as in *v.* 16, "Even so, I pray deliver," &c.

5. *Gracious is the LORD*, &c.] See Pss. ciii. 13, cxi. 4, cxii. 4, &c.

6. *the simple*] Who are without guile, and open to assault, as children.

7. *thy rest*, &c.] That rest, the opposite of death and hell (*v.* 3), which flows from trust in God: Ps. xxiii. 2, 3; cf. Pss. xlii. 5—11, xliii. 5.

9. *I will walk*, &c.] Or, "I shall walk," &c.

in the land of the living] See Pss. xxvii. 13, lii. 5: in Ps. lvi. 13, which is plainly referred to, it is, "the light of the living."

10, 11. *I believed*, &c.] Or, perhaps, "I believed when I said," or, "I believe when I say," &c. The meaning is obscure. See Ps. xxxix. 3, where the tongue at last expresses what long had burnt within: here, it may be that, at last, the Psalmist speaks what he had long time believed; and his speech is (*vv.* 7, 8, 9, 10, &c.), "Thou hast rescued my soul," &c. "I shall walk again before God; I was sore afflicted, and said in my haste," &c. (Ps. xxxi. 22); the general import being: God is faithful, man faithless; this I believe, and said, and say. Ewald supposes that the Psalmist's experience of man's untrustworthiness

[c] Rom. 3. 4.

11 I said in my haste, [c] All men *are* liars.

12 What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me?

13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

15 Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints.

16 O LORD, truly I *am* thy servant; I *am* thy servant, *and* the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

18 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,

19 In the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXVII.

An exhortation to praise God for his mercy and truth.

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was obtained in Babylonish exile: but experience could be furnished nearer home.

liars] The meaning may be "hypocrites," apt to desert in trouble, and to cling in prosperity.

13. *the cup of salvation*, &c.] Heb. "of deliverances." Below (*vv.* 14, 18, 19) a thank-offering is plainly mentioned, and a vow to be performed openly. Hence, it is imagined by some (Rosenm. &c.) that a feast followed such thank-offering, and that a cup, here called a cup of deliverances, was passed round the guests after such feast, to which allusion is made. On the great festival of Passover, after the feast a cup of thanksgiving was passed round (Matt. xxvi. 27). But no Old Testament Scripture refers plainly to any such general custom as that supposed. The drink-offerings of wine (Num. xxviii. 7) do not illustrate this place. In the absence of any authority for a literal acceptation of "cup of salvation," Hengsten. and others consider the word used figuratively, as in Pss. xi. 6, xvi. 5, xxiii. 5, lxxv. 8, &c., and the meaning to be, "I will receive and enjoy the 'lot of salvation,' or the 'prosperous joyous lot' which God has given." Hupfeld adduces the well-known Arabian phrases, a "cup of death," a "cup of love," with which he compares a "cup of deliverances." But the expression, "I will take or raise the cup of deliverances," *i.e.* "the gift of deliverance," seems improper, and pointless. The second clause of the verse occurs three times in this Ps. *vv.* 4, 13, 17.

14. *now in the presence*, &c.] "Openly it shall be done; in the presence," &c. Ps. lvi. 12.

15. *Precious*, &c.] Delitzsch observes that Babylas, Bishop of Antioch, in the Decian persecution, advanced cheerfully to death, singing these words. See Ps. lxxii. 14. The Apostolical Constitutions (vi. 30) recommend, among others, this verse to be sung at the funeral of the faithful.

16. *O LORD, truly*, &c.] These words seem to commence the formal thanksgiving of the worshipper: "Even so, LORD, listen! for *I am Thy servant:*" see the title to Ps. xviii.; and Pss. lxxxvi. 2, 4, lxxxix. 3, 20, 39, cxix. passim.

son of thine handmaid] Ps. lxxxvi. 16.

my bonds] He speaks as if bound to the altar of sacrifice: see *v.* 3.

18. *now in the presence*, &c.] As in *v.* 14: "openly it shall be done, in the presence," &c. The repetition of the words expresses the fixed resolve of the Psalmist.

19. *In the courts of the LORD's house*, &c.] See 2 K. xx. 5; Isai. xxxviii. 22. Kay quotes these places as confirming the idea that the psalm is Hezekiah's. Vaihinger and others consider it written by Zerubbabel: if not by him, by some Israelite, whose memory is indeed stored with passages of the psalms, but of an original genius and deeply earnest faith.

PSALM CXVII.

The Psalmist exhorts all people (xcvi. 1, c. 1) to praise Jehovah for His mercy and faithfulness; cf. Pss. xlvii. 1, lxvi. 1, xcviii. 4, 7. The brevity of the psalm suggests to some (Rosenm. &c.) that it was used liturgically as a formula of dismissal of worshippers after service; or, perhaps, as an introduction to a longer psalm. It is joined to Ps. cxviii, in 27 MSS. of Kenn. and De Rossi, and to Ps. cxvi. in 32 MSS. On the other hand, Delitzsch observes that though brief it expresses the essence of all Messianic psalms. Hence, Cassiodorus calls it "Punctum Psalmorum," as being amongst psalms what a point is among geometrical figures. It resembles Ps. c. in many respects.

In Rom. xv. 11 the Apostle developes the idea which is the germ of the psalm: it calls upon the heathen to praise God for His mercy and truth exhibited to His chosen, in which the heathen will one day share; Deut. xxxii. 43.

[a] Rom. 15. 11.

O [a] PRAISE the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXVIII.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his mercy.* 5 *The psalmist by his experience sheweth how*

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1. *all ye nations*] Or, "Gentiles," Ps. ii. 1. The Chald. form (Hupfeld) of the word *people* is used; the fem. Hebrew form occurs Gen. xxv. 16; Num. xxv. 15.

2. *For his merciful kindness*, &c.] Heb. "His mercy." See Ps. cxv. 1, where mercy and truth are joined.

is great] See ciii. 11.

endureth for ever] so the LXX.: μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, not as Luther translates, "is great in eternity."

PSALM CXVIII.

A song of thanksgiving. After the procemium (1—4) follows an exposition of the occasion of the psalm. Innumerable foes encompassed the Psalmist round about, and threatened instant destruction, but his faith gave him courage, and did not deceive him (*vv.* 5—18). He enters the temple-gates to praise and bless Jehovah (*vv.* 19—21). The people (apparently) mingles its joy and rejoicing with the thanks and prayers of the Psalmist (*vv.* 22—25). The priests (or people) within the temple receive him with blessings, offerings, and prayers for the future (*vv.* 26, 27). The conclusion (*vv.* 28, 29).

It is however a question whether the Psalmist is a prince whom Jehovah (Jah) has delivered, or whether a Chorus sings in the people's name: *vv.* 2, 3, 5, &c. seem rather to favour the latter opinion, it being supposed that the people speaks sometimes in the first person singular (*vv.* 5—21), sometimes perhaps in the third person singular (*v.* 22), sometimes in the first person plural (*vv.* 23, 24). The speakers certainly change at the places specified above. Ewald, Tholuck, &c., imagine other changes (as at *vv.* 5, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28), but there is no end to mere hypothesis.

The psalm is the last of the group of psalms (cxiii.—cxviii.) which constituted the Hallel sung upon the chief festivals.

A not uncommon opinion refers the psalm to David: some incline to the date (2 S. v. 1—5) when, after the death of Ishbosheth, he was anointed king, and when, after the conquest of the Philistines and other neighbouring peoples, he brought the ark of God with great pomp to Zion. Rudinger and others imagine a later date after the conquest above mentioned, and after the four battles described 2 S. xxi., in one of which (2 S. xxi. 16) the life of the king was in imminent peril. But the inscription does not assign the psalm to David, and it wants his characteristic traits; and evidently, from its language and contents, belongs to a later date. Dœderlein applies the psalm to Hezekiah (cf. *v.* 17 with Isai. xxxviii. 1), who was exposed to fearful peril by the invasion of Sennacherib, and whose life too was brought nigh to death by a terrible malady; but *v.* 22 does not apply to him with any propriety. Others (Hengsten., and this is the most common view) conceive the psalm to have been composed soon after the return from exile, in celebration either (1) of the Feast of Tabernacles (Ezra iii. 1—4); or (2) the laying of the foundation-stone of the Temple (iii. 8—13); or (3) the dedication of the Temple (vi. 15—18); or (4) the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. viii. 14). According to any one of these suppositions it is not a chief or leader that details his trials and escapes in *vv.* 5—19, but the people of God; see the second paragraph. It must also be said that not a word of the psalm carries us at once to any one of the occasions after exile specified above.

The well-known phrases (*vv.* 1, 29 and 2—4), compared with Pss. cxv. and cxxxvi., seem to indicate a psalm adapted to Temple-service. The descriptions of peril are general (*vv.* 5, 10). The recurrence of *burdens*, in *vv.* 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, &c., *It is better*, &c., *For in the name of the LORD*, &c., *The right hand of the LORD*, &c., seem also to suggest a Temple-psalm, sung, it may be, by two or more choruses. Also the mention of the singers (*vv.* 2, 3, 4), similar to that in cxxxv. 19, &c., the many phrases borrowed from other Scriptures, and the allusions (*vv.* 24 seq.) to a festival and its accompaniments, fall in better with this idea than with that of a single special occasion.

The texts Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10; Luke xx. 17; Acts iv. 11, shew that the psalm was commonly referred to Messiah in the days of our Lord. Many Rabbins, ancient and modern, interpret the psalm of Him; and Jerome says that the ancient Jews so interpreted it—a statement confirmed by the texts just quoted and by the acclamations of the people, (taken from *vv.* 25, 26), with which they received Christ on His entry into Jerusalem (Matt. xxi. 9).

The first few verses contain the introduction to the psalm, which sets forth who they are that should praise and bless Jehovah on the day of praise.

good it is to trust in God. 19 *Under the type of the psalmist the coming of Christ in his kingdom is expressed.*

O [a] GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: because his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

5 I called upon the LORD † in distress: the LORD answered me, *and set me* in a large place.

6 [b] The LORD *is* † on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see *my desire* upon them that hate me.

8 *It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

9 [c] *It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

[c] Ps. 146. 3

10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I † destroy them.

† Heb. *cut them off.*

11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

12 They compassed me about

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1. *O give thanks*, &c.] See the places in the marg. and Ps. cxv. 9—13; "O praise God for His mercies, of old, and now." These words were sung by the Levites at the time of laying the foundation-stone of the second Temple (Ezra iii. 11), but they are a common formula of thanksgiving. See 1 Chro. xvi. 34, and 2 Chro. v. 13, vii. 3; Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11.

because his mercy, &c.] This is the "burden" of the song; and a better rendering would be, "For His mercy," &c.; or, "That His mercy," &c. as in *vv.* 2, 3, 4.

3. *the house of Aaron*, &c.] Some imagine "They that fear the LORD," &c. to be the proselytes at the gate, Ezra l.c., Acts xiii. 16, 26; but in all probability *vv.* 2, 3, 4 contain a sort of climax: (1) Israel in general, (2) the house of Aaron, (3) the true Israel: compare Ps. cxv. 9—11, and Note.

5. *I called upon the LORD*, &c.] The people (see p. 438), or the victorious leader, proclaim the mercy of Jehovah. as instanced in deed. Lit. "I called upon Jah (Who saved out of Egypt, Ex. xv. 2) out of trouble or strait (see Ps. cxvi. 3), and He answered me in an open plain," *i.e.* answered me, and brought me into a wide open space (Pss. iv. 1, xviii. 19, xxxi. 8), in which I could breathe freely. A similar ellipsis occurs Eccles. v. 20: God answereth him in (restoring) joy of heart. The LXX. render ἐπήκουσέ μου εἰς πλατυσμόν, as if, says Kay, the act of enlargement were the answer. Symm. ἐ. μ. εἰς εὐρυχωρίαν.

6. *I will not fear*, &c.] Ps. lvi. 4—11.

7. *with them that help*, &c.] Rather, "Jehovah is on my side with them that help me;" not as if Jehovah were one of many helpers, but among helpers to help them: Ps. liv. 4: see too Judg. v. 14.

therefore shall I see, &c.] See Ps. liv. 7, cxii. 8.

9. *princes*] See Ps. cxlvi. 3. These words, in all probability, were said, not as of course, in full security, but in the midst of extremest peril, or after an almost miraculous escape, through Jehovah, Omnipotent Helper!

10. *All nations*, &c.] An incongruity arises from the past tenses. "All nations compassed me," &c. coupled with the future, "but in the name of the LORD will I destroy (LXX. ἠμυνάμην,) them." But it must be recollected that the latter words are one of the "burdens" of the psalm, and express what the Psalmist *always* can do, and will do, through the aid of Jehovah. Lit. "In the name of Jehovah 'tis certain that I shall destroy them." The A.V. does not render the particle (כִּי), which expresses the full amount of confidence felt; cf. Ps. cxxviii. 2. *All nations* must be understood, not historically, but poetically. The supposition of Delitzsch, Moll, &c. that the past tense does not describe a fact, but only an hypothesis ("Though all nations compass me," &c. "in the name of the LORD will I destroy them"), sacrifices the point and poetry of the words, which undoubtedly describe actual experience. Perowne remarks that the repetition four times of the words, *they compassed me about* marks the pertinacious animosity of the enemies described.

12. *like bees*] *i.e.* with innumerable thronging numbers, and a furious desire to destroy.

bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will † destroy them.

† Heb. *cut down.*

13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

14 [d] The LORD *is* my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

d Exod. 15. 2. Isai. 12. 2.

15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation *is* in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

18 The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, *and* I will praise the LORD:

20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

See Deut. i. 44; Isai. vii. 18; Virg. 'Georg.' IV. 236.

they are quenched, &c.] Attacking with prodigious rage, and seeming as though they would utterly destroy the devoted city, they suddenly perish, and no trace of them abides, as fire among thorns blazes up suddenly with vast heat (Ps. lviii. 9, where see note) and crackling, and directly dies out, leaving no trace; see Isai. xxxiii. 12. "Thorn bushes, in the East, are destroyed in the cultivated fields by fire in the heat of summer. The fire quickly spreads everywhere, but soon dies out, and the bushes are reduced to ashes."—Knapp.

13. *Thou hast thrust*, &c.] "Thou hast striven hard, O mine enemy, and pushed at me sore, that I should fall: but Jehovah sustained me." In Ps. xxxv. 5, the Angel of God threatens and pushes (A. V. *chases*) His enemies. The people, or prince, apostrophizes the enemy as one.

14. *The LORD*, &c.] The signal miracles of deliverance, whatever they were, recall the miracles of old, Ex. xv. 2: see too Isai. xii. 2, where the same words occur. All praise (such is the import) be to Jehovah, from Whom, in days past, came miraculous, effectual aid, and now comes.

15. *The voice*, &c.] The voice of joy and rejoicing is heard not only in palaces of princes, and in public, but everywhere, in the tabernacles or dwellings (Ps. lxxviii. 55, xci. 10) of all true Israelites, (Ps. xxxiii. 1), on account of the blessings bestowed upon His chosen. The next versicle (with which compare Ex. xv. 6, 12; Num. xxiv. 18; and *v.* 16) contains the words in which Jehovah's worshippers everywhere express their sense of His doings.

16. *The right hand of the LORD is exalted*] *i. e.* "high above all other hands" (see Job xxiv. 24), or, perhaps, actively, "exalts," "supports," see Ps. xxxvii. 34.

17. *I shall not die*, &c.] The speaker, draws a general conclusion from what goes before in reference to his own fortunes: "I shall not die, as mine enemies wish, and have all but accomplished, but live, and publish the miracles of Jehovah's mercy." This verse was hung up by Luther in his study; and was his favourite verse of a favourite psalm. He says, "Though I love all the psalms, yet I delight in this psalm especially, and look upon it as written specially for me; indeed it has come to my aid again and again, and supported me in heavy trials, when kaiser, king, philosopher, and saint, could do nought."

18. *The LORD*, &c.] His mercy is shewn in this: He chastened me sore for the sake of correction and instruction, (Isai. xxvii. 7), yet suffered me not to perish, but saved me, to sing His praise. Cf. Jer. x. 24, xxx. 11, &c.

19. *Open to me the gates*, &c.] A similar address Ps. xxiv. 7. The *gates of righteousness* are so called, probably, because the righteous people (see next verse) pass through them to worship. See Pss. v. 2, 5, 6, 7; xvi. 1; also Ps. iv. 5, *Sacrifices of righteousness*. Or the meaning may be "gates which lead to His temple, Who is the well and fountain of righteousness" (see *v.* 26). The supposition (Bunsen, Hupfeld, &c.) that the "gates of righteousness" are ideal, and that the words simply express a hope on the part of the Psalmist of entering God's temple, and thus venting his enthusiastic feelings of love and gratitude, is scarcely consistent with *v.* 20, and deprives the words of almost all interest.

20. *This gate*, &c.] Rather, "this gate (belongs to) the LORD." *the righteous*, *i. e.*

Matth. 21. 42. Mark 12. 10. Luke 20. 17. Acts 4. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 4. † Heb. *This is from the* LORD.

22 The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner.

23 This is the LORD's doing; it *is* marvellous in our eyes.

24 This *is* the day *which* the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

26 Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

Matth. 21. 9.

27 God *is* the LORD, which hath

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the Israelite people, enter through it. The gate of the Israelites was upon the East side of the outer vestibule.

22. *The stone which*, &c.] Probably the words are proverbial. "A stone (De Wette), they say, rejected of the builders as useless, has been chosen, and set in the place of chiefest importance in the palace or temple;" *i.e.* "a people once rejected and of no account is now restored and re-established, and counted as a foundation-stone of the temple of God, which He is setting up upon the earth"—so Kimchi: or, "a ruler or prince, once neglected, and of no account, is now a victor and ruler, and, it may be, High Priest, of the chosen people." The meaning of the word "corner stone" is doubtful. Some understand the "foundation stone," upon which the building rests; Job xxxviii. 6; Jer. li. 26; Eph. ii. 20, 21. Others, the "epistyle," or long block of stone resting upon the top of the columns supporting the roof, Zech. iv. 7. Such stones in Egyptian temples seem to serve the purpose of wooden beams. The word of Jehovah, Isai. xxviii. 16, Perowne remarks, seems to connect this place with the New Testament quotations of it.

23. *This is the LORD's doing*, &c.] *This*, *i.e.* that the stone rejected is become the head stone, &c.

marvellous] *i.e.* miraculous.

24. *This is the day*, &c.] This is the day which Jehovah has *made glorious;* see 1 S. xii. 6: *It is the Lord that advanced* (Heb. made) *Moses and Aaron*. The day on which Jehovah's gift is celebrated, not necessarily the day on which it is bestowed, is meant.

25. *Save now*, &c.] Or, "Save, I pray," σῶσον δή, LXX. See Ps. xii. 1, xxviii. 9, &c.; also Ps. cxvi. 4, 16; Neh. i. 11, for similar phrases, or parts of the phrase used. The original word, *Hosannah*, or, "Save, I pray," is repeated, with the verse following, by the multitude, in their enthusiastic welcome of Messiah into His kingdom, Matt. xxi. 9.

26. *Blessed be he*, &c.] "Blessed be He" that enters (*vv.* 19, 20), in the name, *i.e.* under the guardianship, of Jehovah, into His sanctuary: or, according to the accents, Blessed in the name of Jehovah (Deut. xxi. 5; Num. vi. 27; 2 S. vi. 11) be "everyone" (the sing. used collectively) that enters into the courts of Jehovah.

we have blessed, &c.] "We bless you from the sanctuary of God, out of which comes true blessing, and into which he who is blessed is entering." The second versicle probably repeats in other phrase the sentiment of the first; see Ruth ii. 4; Ps. cxxix. 8, &c. This verse may probably be added to the list, p. 439, &c., of Liturgic formulæ. The festive procession possibly which sings the psalm (*vv.* 5—18), in the name of the people, or which accompanies the prince victorious, enters the Temple-gates (at verse 20), and sings the remaining verses of the psalm within the Sanctuary.

27. *which hath shewed us*, &c.] *Light*, in the wilderness by the pillar of fire, Ex. xiii. 22, xiv. 20; Neh. ix. 12. We may supply "and will again *shew light* in darkness, or *give aid* in trouble."

bind the sacrifice, &c.] Bind the victim (Ex. xxiii. 18) with cords, and lead it to the altar, to the very horns, (see Dean Stanley, 'Jewish Church,' Vol. II. p. 209), to one of which the victim was fastened. Luther, Tholuck, and others, interpret differently: "Decorate the festival with leafy boughs, even up to the horns of the altar." See Neh. viii. 15, 16, for the custom supposed to be referred to. But it is doubtful if the Hebrew will bear this meaning: and "the decorations which reach to the horns of the altar," seem hard to conceive. The common interpretation is supported by the best authorities. With *v.* 28 cf. Ex. xv. 2.

It is difficult, in any translation, to convey an idea of the reality, fire, intensity of faith, which this psalm expresses. It carries us at once into the midst of a joyous festival (*v.* 24), celebrated, apparently, on account of some signal deliverance. The spirit, tone, and language (De Wette) forbid the supposition of its origin in the days of the Maccabees; and no time in late Jewish history points to any chief who could with propriety have uttered verses 5—19, &c. in his own person. On the other hand, the point of the psalm appears to suffer by

shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, *even* unto the horns of the altar.

28 Thou *art* my God, and I will praise thee: *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee.

29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

PSALM CXIX.

This psalm containeth sundry prayers, praises, and professions of obedience.

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the supposition that the speaker is the people, or a chorus for the people: and *vv.* 17, 18 can scarcely with any propriety be applied to a people. Yet one or two verses (23, 27) fall in easily with this hypothesis; and places in Isaiah, as chapter xlii., and of Jeremiah, as Lam. i. 12, &c. are parallel to it on this supposition, describing, as they do, the people of God under the image of His servant, acting, suffering, or praying, as the case may be. Many verses of the psalm are applied to Christ in the New Testament (see p. 438), and seem in fact to obtain their full significance only in Him. In this sense the psalm is Messianic; and other psalms may be instanced in which the voice of the people is consciously or unconsciously the voice of Messiah the Prince. David may have written the first germ of the psalm; Hezekiah may have used it on his recovery from mortal sickness, or his deliverance from peril of the Assyrians. Other additions may have been made in after times to suit occasions which emerged: and a psalm written in the first instance to thank God for mercies shewn to one pre-eminent among his people, may have been used for occasions in which the people, or a chorus for it, speaks and sings.

PSALM CXIX.

A hymn in praise of the law, which is mentioned in every verse of the psalm, except *vv.* 122 and 132, sometimes as the law, sometimes as His testimonies, commandments, statutes, precepts, ceremonies, truth, way, righteousness. The connexion of thoughts and images is not apparent, as might be expected in an alphabetical psalm. The law of God is a practical counsellor, and he that walks by it walks in the light, *vv.* 24, 59, 105, &c.: it is the word of God and abides for ever, *vv.* 89, 90, 96, 152, 160: by it the world is ruled, and will for ever be ruled, *v.* 91: it is the guide of youth and a polar star, so to say, to lead the young safely to a haven of rest, *v.* 9: it comes from One Who is so greatly to be feared that the flesh of the Psalmist trembles at the thought of His judgments, *v.* 120: but is withal so excellent, and is found experimentally to be so precious, that it is his treasure, and far better than gold and silver, *vv.* 56, 57, 72, 127, 162, 111. The more it is pondered the more it is found to contain in it the highest wisdom and supremest cunning, and to be full of miracles, *vv.* 18, 27: in sharp trial it alone gives comfort, *vv.* 28, 50, 92: by sorrow and suffering only can a true understanding of it be obtained, *vv.* 67, 71, 75: a knowledge of it makes its fortunate possessor wiser than his teachers or than the ancients, *vv.* 99, 100: the neglect of it by many causes to the Psalmist bitterest sorrow, *vv.* 53, 136, 139, 158: his most eager desire is that its excellence and preciousness should be known far and wide, *v.* 46: if persecution and shame should be his portion on account of it he must bear his lot without wavering, *vv.* 61, 109, 157, 161: if contemned and persecuted on its account by the enemies of God, so much the more steadily must he converse and consort with His friends and worshippers, *vv.* 63, 79.

Interspersed are prayers for grace and assistance to live according to the law, and to escape the misery which marks its violation, *vv.* 17, 18, 25, 36, 64, 125; together with assertions of innocence before God and man in respect of any sin deliberate and malicious, *vv.* 55, 101, 102; and entreaties for God's favour, according to His wont, *vv.* 34, 40, 132, 134.

Some imagine the psalm to have been written by David, before his accession to the kingdom, in exile and peril; *vv.* 9, 23, 46, 141, 161, seem to favour this view. Others (of chief authority) from the language and contents imagine the psalm to be of much later date. Jebb, Vol. II. p. 274, supposes the author to be Daniel: many conceive Ezra to be its author; Dean Stanley, 'Jew. Ch.' II. 527, says of the rhythm that it seems to mark the age of Jeremiah. Kay supposes it to depict the mental state of those who have passed through the discipline of the captivity. During that long monotonous period, he says, of servitude, the memory of God's law came back to the faithful remnant, and stirred up deep longing for past privileges. Hitzig, as usual, refers the psalm to the days of the Maccabees: see 1 Macc. xii. 48. At whatever time written, it seems written by one of signal condition, overshadowed with trials, despised, persecuted, in deepest peril, through the machinations of the enemies of God, as well as his own enemies, *vv.* 23, 46, 161; and yet confident of aid through long experience of God's mercy.

Ewald says that the psalm contains few

א ALEPH.

BLESSED *are* the [1]undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.

[1] Or, perfect, or, sincere.

2 Blessed *are* they that keep his testimonies, *and that* seek him with the whole heart.

3 They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

4 Thou hast commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently.

5 O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

6 Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

7 I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned †thy righteous judgments.

† Heb. *judgment of thy righteousness.*

8 I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

ב BETH.

9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word.

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sparks of poetical fire. It contains many repetitions and imitations of earlier psalms; and its alphabetical arrangement is essentially unpoetical: but no part of Scripture is more deeply imprinted upon memory, especially of the young, than portions of it; nor is any Scripture more suggestive of edifying trains of thought; nor is any other Scripture of the Old Testament more saturated, so to say, with a spirit all but Christian, of humility, trust, devoted love to God, and realization of His near Presence, than this psalm: which is an epitome of all true religion, and must be studied by any one who wishes to fathom the meaning of the Law; and the elevation of soul, the hope, joy, confidence felt in presence of kings and princes, by pious Jews.

It is divided into 22 equal portions according to the number of the letters of the alphabet. To each portion its own letter is prefixed, and every verse in that portion in the original begins with the same letter. The sacred name Jehovah occurs 22 times; though not once in each section corresponding to a letter. Other alphabetical Pss. are ix., xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxlv.: (see the notes upon these psalms). It is a reasonable supposition that all such psalms were written to assist memory: and the artificial construction of this particular psalm suggests a late date for its composition; which also best accords with its tone and manner, its reference to proud ones, princes, and persecutors, and complaints of violence and wrong.

Eight different words are employed to express God's word, or law, or revealed truth. Some commentators define accurately the import of each of such terms: but it does not appear that they are used, in the psalm, each in its accurate meaning, but almost indifferently one for the other.

ALEPH.

The blessedness of those that keep the law, of whom the Psalmist covets to be one.

1. *in the way*] *i.e.* of life: *in the law*, *i.e.* the revelation delivered on Sinai.

2. *his testimonies*] *i.e.* His commands to do right and to shun wrong: not, as the Rabbins affirm, His precepts in Levit. The Law and the Testimony (see Ps. lxxviii. 5) mean much the same.

3. *They also do no iniquity*, &c.] The blessedness of those who walk in the law: they do—or have done—no wickedness: but walk—or have always walked—in His ways. Throughout the psalm it may be noticed that sometimes the present tense is employed indicating present action: sometimes the perfect to indicate past and present time: see *vv.* 10, 11, 13, 14, 21, 51—61, 101, 102, 131, 145, 147.

5. *directed*] See Prov. iv. 25, "made direct and straight," or perhaps "firmly fixed and placed;" said, properly, of feet firmly placed in the way; next transferred to the way itself.

6. *Then shall I not be*, &c.] *ashamed*, *i.e.* disappointed of my hope which is in Thee, *when*, or, *if*, I look to and note *all Thy commandments* to keep them.

7. *I will praise*, &c.] Cf. 106, 160, 164. "When I am fully instructed in Thy law and in Thy judgments according to it (which all are righteous and true) then shall I praise Thee adequately with heart attuned to Thy service." The word rendered *judgments* means, as in Ps. xix. 9, judgments by word of mouth, decrees, laws, issuing in acts: see Exod. xxi. 1.

8. *O forsake*, &c.] "O forsake me not *utterly* or **very far**, lest of my unassisted strength, in dire extremity, I be unable to keep them."

BETH.

The security of those, especially of the young, who keep the law.

9. *Wherewithal*, &c.] A young man is mentioned, as in Ps. xxxiv. 11, on account of youth's temptations: some think on account

10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

12 Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.

13 With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.

15 I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

16 I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

ג GIMEL.

17 Deal bountifully with thy servant, *that* I may live, and keep thy word.

18 [†]Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

19 [a]I *am* a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

20 My soul breaketh for the longing *that it hath* unto thy judgments at all times.

21 Thou hast rebuked the proud *that are* cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

22 Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

23 Princes also did sit *and* speak against me: *but* thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

† Heb. *Reveal.*

a Gen. 47. 9. 1 Chron. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. Hebr. 11. 13.

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of the youth of the Psalmist, see 99, 100; but the Ps. is scarcely the utterance of youth. *Thy word*, *i.e.* "Thy commandments." The second versicle gives the answer to the first.

11. *Thy word*, &c.] "As treasure safely stored away in secret repository I lay by in my heart Thy word:" see Luke ii. 51; Ps. xviii. 30: or, "I keep Thy word close to my heart and obey it: not as an outward law, but as a guide ever at hand."

13. *With my lips*, &c.] "With my lips, according to the command (Deut. vi. 7), I have recounted, again and again, to all near me, the judgments that Thy mouth delivered of old."

14. *thy testimonies*] *i.e.* "Thy commands, or the declarations of Thy will generally in the Law;" see *vv.* 2, 22, &c.

15. *meditate*, &c.] See *vv.* 23, 27, 48, 78, and Ps. civ. 34; Gen. xxiv. 63. The idea seems to be that of "singing," or "speaking of:" Virg. 'Ecl.' I. 2. *Thy ways*, *i.e* "The paths of life marked out in Thy law," Ps. xxv. 4.

16. *I will delight*, &c.] The present here, and in *v.* 15, is more emphatic: "I meditate (all the day long) in Thy precepts: my delight is in Thy statutes: I cease not, at any time, to think and talk of Thy word."

GIMEL.

17. *Deal bountifully*, &c.] "Of Thy bountiful goodness grant to Thy servant that I may live: so shall I keep Thy law." He prays for life, in the midst of peril, see *v.* 87, &c., and promises to spend it according to God's law.

18. *Open thou*, &c.] "Open Thou mine eyes to discern the wondrous things in Thy law; hidden, it may be, under the letter, and concealed, except from those whose eyes are opened of God."

19. *I am a stranger*, &c.] See *v.* 54. Man is a stranger in the earth (see the marg. and Gen. xvii. 8, xxiii. 4), far from his home, and ignorant of the way to please God: the word of God is his only solace and protection: and for this the Psalmist prays (*v.* 20) with a *longing* which even *breaks*, or crushes, his soul!

21. *Thou hast rebuk d*, &c.] "Thou hast rebuked, *i.e.* chastised and restrained (Ps. ix. 5, lxviii. 30, cvi. 9) the proud (see Ps. xix. 13, Heb.), *i.e.* the rebellious and impious, who are accursed, (see Deut. xxvii. 26), because of Thy reproof; and do err from Thy commandments."

22. *Remove from me*, &c.] "Defend me, as I keep Thy commandments, from the reproach and scorn of my foes, who are also Thy foes!" De Wette, Kay, and others, compare Josh. v. 9, and render "Roll away, &c." But the idea is rather that of removing a veil or covering: supra, v. 18, (Heb.); Isai. xxii. 8, xlvii. 2; Nah. iii. 5.

23. *Princes also*, &c.] "Princes too **do sit** in council, and **speak against me,** (see Ezek. xxxiii. 30; Dan. vi. 4); but Thy servant **is meditating** upon Thy law: yea, Thy Testimonies (*v.* 24) are so delightful a meditation, that he cares not for the machinations of his foes: nor ever does, nor imagines, any evil thing, to give occasion against him."

24 Thy testimonies also *are* my delight *and* †my counsellers.

Heb. *men of my counsel.*

ד DALETH.

25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.

26 I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: [b]teach me thy statutes.

Ps. 25. 4. & 27. 11. & 86. 11.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 My soul †melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

Heb. *droppeth.*

29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.

30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid *before me.*

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

ה HE.

33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it *unto* the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart.

35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

37 †Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; *and* quicken thou me in thy way.

† Heb. *Make to pass.*

38 Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who *is devoted* to thy fear.

DALETH.

25. *My soul*, &c.] "My soul (Heb. life) is brought low, even to the dust (Ps. vii. 5, xliv. 25), O quicken, *i.e.* restore to vigorous life (Ps. lxxi. 20, lxxxv. 6), according to Thy promise:" compare *vv.* 37, 40, 50, 88, 93, 107, 144, 149, &c.: also *vv.* 9, 28, 38, 42, 65, 116, 169, &c. The quickening prayed for is not of the spirit, but of the body, depressed to the lowest estate by suffering and sorrow.

26. *I have declared*, &c. "I have put before Thee—I do daily put before Thee—*i.e.* in prayer and supplication—my way of life (Ps. xxxvii. 5), its perils, temptations, endeavours, and Thou hast heard and approved my tale: O teach me Thy statutes, that so it may ever be." The second versicle occurs *vv.* 12, 64, 68, 108, 124; and Ps. xxv. 4.

27. *Make me to understand*, &c.] See *v.* 18.

28. *My soul melteth*, &c.] See *v.* 25. "My soul, so to say, is dissolved in tears (Job xvi. 20), through heaviness: strengthen Thou me, or raise me up out of my fallen estate, according to Thy word."

29. *Remove*, &c.] "*the way of lying, i.e.* of false religion, the opposite of Thy law (see *vv.* 30, 104, 128, 168): and *grant me,* as a gracious gift, *Thy law*, its knowledge and practice." Jerome renders "Legem tuam dona mihi."

30. *I have chosen*, &c.] "I have chosen (and now choose) the way of true religion: Thy judgments and laws I have put, and do put always, before mine eyes (Ps. xvi. 8), as rules to be ever observed."

31. *I have stuck*, &c.] The same word, in the original, as in *v.* 25: "I have striven always, and do strive, *to adhere stedfastly* to Thy testimonies: O succour me lest I depart from them and be put to open shame."

32. *I will run*, &c.] "I will run joyfully in the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge my heart (Isai. lx. 5; 2 Cor. vi. 11, 13), to serve Thee perfectly." A heart confined, constrained, and sad, seems contrasted, in the latter clause, with a heart free to expand, unconstrained, and joyous. It is possible, however (De Wette, &c.), that enlargement of heart (see 1 K. iv. 29) may mean *understanding to comprehend God's commandments* thoroughly.

HE.

33. *unto the end*] *i.e.* "of life;" see 112. Cf. Matt. xxiv. 13.

36. *covetousness*] Or "robbery." See 1 Sam. viii. 3. The word may be put for any irregular lust: or it may have been a special temptation, at the time of the composition of this psalm, to those who apostatized from God. See Jer. vi. 13, viii. 10; Prov. i. 19.

37. *Turn away*, &c.] "Aid me to turn aside (Isai. xxxiii. 15; Job xxxi. 26, 27) from aught that solicits to ungodliness in act or belief: and quicken me in the knowledge and practice of Thy law."

38. *Stablish*, &c.] "Confirm and realize

39 Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments *are* good.

40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

ו VAU.

41 Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word.

42 [1]So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

45 And I will walk [2]at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

46 I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

47 And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

ז ZAIN.

49 Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

50 This *is* my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The proud have had me greatly

[1] Or, *So shall I answer him that reproveth me in a thing.*

[2] Heb. *at large.*

Thy promise (of aid and support) to Thy servant who is devoted *to Thy fear, i. e.* to Thy reverential service:" so the Syr.—Or, "confirm and strengthen to Thy servant *Thy promise* which (*i.e.* promise) *is attached to the fear of Thee:*" see Pss. xxv. 10, cxii. 1, cxxviii. 1: or, rather, "confirm &c. *Thy promise* which (*i.e.* promise) *issues in Thy fear*, or is accomplished in *the increase of* reverence for Thee:" such seems the import of the Prayer-Book Version. "Stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee." A reverence or fear is intended which includes love.

39. *Turn away*, &c.] "Guard me from *the reproach which* (alone) *I fear* of sinning against Thee: *for Thy judgments, i. e.* revealed laws, *are good*, and happy is he that keeps them!" Others (De Wette, &c.) explain "Save me from the disgrace which *I fear* and merit for my sins: *for Thy judgments are* merciful:"—a less pointed meaning.

40. *I have longed*, &c.] "*I have longed* for the will to follow *Thy precepts: O quicken me* **according to** *Thy righteousness*, which respects fervent prayer." See Ps. xxxi. 1.

VAU.

42. *So shall I have*, &c.] "So shall I have something (דבר, a "word," or "thing") wherewith to reply to him that upbraideth me, even Thy mercies, shewn to me according to my trust." The marginal rendering gives a sense more pregnant, "So shall I answer him that reproveth me in a thing," or "cause." "Answer" and "cause" seem corresponding phrases borrowed from courts of justice.

43. *And take not*, &c.] "And take not utterly from me the word of truth, that I cannot speak of it: for I have hoped," &c. Others connect the Hebrew words (עד־מאד) translated "utterly," with the word preceding them. "And take not from me the word of truth, *which is the very truth*, that I cannot speak of it," &c. *The word of truth* is the word of, *experience of*, or, *confession of*, God's truth and faithfulness to promise: and the prayer is for experimental evidence of these attributes of God, to free the heart, and unlock the tongue. The following verses describe the effects of God's favour so entreated.

45. *And I will walk*, &c.] "I shall walk **in a wide way**, *i.e.* free, unconstrained, unoccupied, save by Thy service!" Marg., "at large." *For I seek*, &c., *i.e.* "crave for," "earnestly desire;" as in 94, 155.

46. *I will speak of thy testimonies*, &c.] The motto of the Augsburg Confession of Faith is, "et loquebar de testimoniis tuis in conspectu regum et non confundebar." The verse seems decisively to shew that the author is not a king: it would be appropriate in Ezra or Nehemiah.

48. *My hands also will I lift up*, &c.] As to the sanctuary in which God is, and out of which His power comes, in token of love and longing. See Pss. xxviii. 2, cxxxiv. 2, cxli. 2; also Lam. iii. 41. *Meditate, i.e* deeply, fondly, eloquently: see *v.* 15, etc.

ZAIN.

49. *Remember*, &c.] "Remember **the promise** made to Thy servant," &c. A special word or promise is perhaps alluded to. See Ps. lvi. 8.

51. *The proud*] *i.e.* "scoffers." See Pss.

in derision: *yet* have I not declined from thy law.

52 I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.

53 Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

54 Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

55 I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

56 This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

ח CHETH.

57 *Thou art* my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.

58 I intreated thy †favour with *my* whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.

† Heb. *face.*

59 I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

60 I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

61 The ‖bands of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law.

‖ Or, *companies.*

62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

63 I *am* a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

64 The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.

ט TETH.

65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

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xlii. 3, lxxix. 10, xxii. 8, 9. "*Have had* and still have *me*," &c.: see *v.* 3.

52. *thy judgments*, &c.] See above, *v.* 7. God's laws, *vv.* 50, 51, righteous and true, rewarding the good, and punishing the evil, are still meant: of which the recollection fills the mind of the Psalmist with consolation.

53. *Horror*, &c.] The LXX. render the word [זלעפה] by ἀθυμία, "depression:" Arab. and Syr. "sadness:" Jerome "horror:" Calvin "terror:" see Ps. xi. 6, and Note. Probably a burning wind, or simoom, is meant in the place quoted, which scorches up and destroys vegetation in a moment: and, metaphorically, in this place, a sharp, penetrating terror, or horror. A somewhat similar expression is found in Ps. xxxix. See also *v.* 136 of this psalm.

54. *Thy statutes*, &c.] "Thy statutes have been sweet songs, *i.e.* Delightful divertisements to me:" *in the house of my pilgrimage*, *i.e.* in this earth, in which we are pilgrims (Gen. xlvii. 9; 1 Chro. xxix. 15; *v.* 19 of the Ps.), our home being elsewhere, Eccles. xii. 5.

56. *This I had*, &c.] "Thus much I had and have: this best possession was and is mine;" *because*, or *that*, "I have kept and keep Thy law:"—to others are other blessings assigned. See *v.* 50.

CHETH.

57. *Thou art my portion*, &c.] Heb. "Jehovah (is) my portion," *i.e.* "Mine inheritance, more precious than any other." See Pss. xvi. 5, cxlii. 5; Josh. xvii. 14, xviii. 10. Jehovah was Himself the portion of the house of Levi, Josh. xiii. 33: see also Numb. xviii. 20. There should be a stop after "portion."

I have said, &c.] "I have determined and spoken my determination," &c. Others render "Jehovah is my portion: I have said and say, *so* that I keep Thy words." See Ps. cxl. 6; Isai. xlv. 24.

59. *I thought on my ways*, &c.] "I examined the ways of my life, and do examine, and strive always to direct my steps in the way of Thy testimonies."

61, 62, 63, 64. *The bands*, &c.] See *v.* 110; Ps. xviii. 5. The meaning probably is, "the **snares** of wicked men **surrounded** me, but, &c.," *i.e.* In the midst of wicked men, each moment expecting violence and death, my hope is utterly in Thee:—At midnight I rise to praise Thee: I choose for companions only Thy worshippers (cf. Prov. xxviii. 24): Oh, teach me Thy statutes, Thou that fillest the whole earth (Ps. xxxiii. 5) with Thy goodness."

TETH.

65. *Thou hast dealt well*, &c.] "In time past Thy guidance of Thy servant has been according to promise, and wise, and kind."

66. *Teach me*, &c.] "Instruct me in true knowledge to discern the right and the wrong: for I have believed in Thy commandments, the only sources of wisdom and of divine instruction."

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou *art* good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

69 The proud have forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep thy precepts with *my* whole heart.

70 Their heart is as fat as grease; *but* I delight in thy law.

71 *It is* good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

72 [c]The law of thy mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

[c] Ps. 19. 10. Prov. 8. 11.

י JOD.

73 Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

74 They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* [†]right, and *that* thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

[†] Heb. *righteousness.*

76 Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be [†]for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

[†] Heb. *to comfort me.*

77 Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law *is* my delight.

78 Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: *but* I will meditate in thy precepts.

79 Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

80 Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

כ CAPH.

81 My soul fainteth for thy salvation: *but* I hope in thy word.

82 Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become like a bottle

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67. *Before,* &c.] *Afflicted, i.e.* with chastisement; see 71, 75.

thy word] *i.e.* "Thy Law," 103, 140.

68. *Thou art good,* &c.] "Thou art kind and doest kindness; Oh, teach me Thy statutes that I may merit Thy mercy!"

69. *forged a lie,* &c.] The metaphor may be like the Greek (ῥάπτειν δόλους), from sewing or patching up: or, from smearing, or daubing (Delitzsch, Moll, &c.), a wall, so as to hide the real substance. The Psalmist remains true to God despite the falsehoods with which the proud smear and hide his true fidelity.

70. *Their heart,* &c.] "Their heart is dull and brutal (Isai. vi. 10; Pss. xvii. 10, lxxiii. 7), so that they understand not Thy statutes: in which I delight; yea, and love them with my whole heart; and (*v.* 72) above all price!"

71. *It is good for me,* &c.] Trial at the time is hard to bear (Hebr. xii. 11): but afterwards, it works, through the grace of God, true knowledge.

JOD.

73. *Thy hands,* &c.] "Thy hands have cunningly made me: Oh, leave me not without understanding to know Thy commandments and live!"

74. *They that fear,* &c.] See Pss. xxxiv. 2, xxxv. 27, cvii. 42: "They that fear Thee will rejoice when they see my hope recompensed."

75, 76. *I know, O LORD,* &c.] "That Thy judgments are right, and that Thou hast afflicted me in mercy. But as the suffering is sore let Thy merciful kindness also be with me according to promise." The first of these verses is a treasury of Christian consolation: it should be deeply imprinted—as upon the rock with a pen of steel—in the memory of sufferers always!

78. *dealt perversely with me without a cause*] Or, it may be, "oppress me unjustly without a cause." Shame and discomfiture seem the fitting recompense of the proud; who see, by the providence of God, their plans fail, and prosperity, instead of calamity, result to him whom they persecute. Gen. l. 20.

79. *turn unto me*] *i.e.* "Turn to me and to fellowship with me." Jer. xv. 19; Prov. ix. 4.

80. *sound*] *i.e.* "perfect," or, "undivided in its allegiance." Deut. xviii. 13.

CAPH.

81. *My soul,* &c.] "My soul faints through eager desire for Thy salvation: but my hope is in Thy promise." Ps. lxxxiv. 2. Infr. *vv.* 82 and 123; Ps. lxix. 3, &c.

82. *Mine eyes,* &c.] "As the eyes of him, that watches for one that cometh not, fail with watching, so mine eyes fail me watching evermore for Thy promise."

in the smoke; *yet* do I not forget thy statutes.

84 How many *are* the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

85 The proud have digged pits for me, which *are* not after thy law.

86 All thy commandments *are* † faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.

87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.

88 Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

ל LAMED.

89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

90 Thy faithfulness *is* † unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it † abideth.

91 They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all *are* thy servants.

92 Unless thy law *had been* my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

93 I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

94 I *am* thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.

95 The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: *but* I will consider thy testimonies.

96 I have seen an end of all perfection: *but* thy commandment *is* exceeding broad.

† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

† Heb. *standeth.*

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83. *For I am become*, &c.] "As wine-skin in the smoke, My heart is sere and dried." Keble. Galen, 'De Med. Simpl.' IV. 14, T. XIII. p. 100 (Ed. Chartr.), says, "Wine in Asia is stored in upper chambers, underneath which large fires are commonly burning. The warmth communicates to it, quickly, properties and excellences, which a long time only could otherwise impart." See also Hor. 'Od.' Lib. III. 8, *vv.* 9, 10: Ovid, 'Fast.' V. 517.

84. *How many*, &c.] "Are they so many as to admit of delay in the manifestation of Thy righteous judgments?"

85. *which are not*, &c.] The proud have digged pits which are not after Thy law, that is, are opposed to and in defiance of Thy law (a similar figure, meiosis, Ezek. xx. 25): see Pss. vii. 15, ix. 15. The pits, which were dug to catch wild animals, are meant. See Ex. xxi 33; 2 S. xxiii. 20; Jer. xviii. 20, 22.

87. *They had almost*, &c.] "They had almost destroyed and left no trace of me upon the earth, on which my lot and man's lot is cast, but, &c." (see 92 and 109). Others, as De Wette, Vaihinger, &c. interpret differently.

88. *Quicken me*, &c.] See *v.* 107, and above, *v.* 25.

LAMED.

89, 90, 91. *For ever, O LORD*, &c.] The idea is, "The word (or promise) of God is in heaven, where He is: He founded the eternal earth; His ordinances rule always heaven and earth: and all things serve Him." The inference is, that His word and ordinances to man are also eternal, and ever faithful, see Ps. lxxxix. 2. Others (Hupfeld, &c.) interpret "the word of God (*v.* 89), is settled, in heaven," not, as above explained, "settled in the place where God is," but only by a figure "as in heaven, as in the place which is the image of unchangeableness." The next verse, these say, confirms this view: God's faithfulness is like the earth fixed for ever on its basis, and is to all generations. But the force of the passage is impaired by supposing a comparison that is not expressed; as it is often, *e.g.* Ps. lxxxix. 29, 36, &c. A tacit inference from the bare statement of God's working in heaven and earth, and with the eternal stars, seems eminently expressive. Compare Jer. xxxi. 35, 37, &c.

91. *according to thine ordinances*, &c.] *i.e.* "listening, so to say, to Thy commands; for all are Thy servants."

92. *Unless thy law*, &c.] "If my delight had not been in Thy law, so excellent and eternal, I should have perished long ago in my misery." A verse of price inestimable!

94. *I am thine*, &c.] "Thou art my God, and I Thy servant: save me according to Thy promises and my service!"

96. *I have seen*, &c.] "There is nought which is perfect, or without a limit of duration and extent; but Thy commandments are in duration infinite, and in extent correspond to man's infinite needs." See the description of God Himself in Job xl. 7, &c.

מ MEM.

97 O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for [†] they *are* ever with me.

[†] Heb. *it is ever with me.*

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

100 I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

103 [d] How sweet are thy words unto my [†] taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth!

[d] Ps. 19. 10.
[†] Heb. *palate.*

104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

נ NUN.

105 Thy word *is* a [1] lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

[1] Or, *candle.*

106 I have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

108 Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments.

109 My soul *is* continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

110 The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.

111 Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart.

112 I have inclined mine heart [†] to perform thy statutes alway, *even* unto the end.

[†] Heb *to do.*

ס SAMECH.

113 I hate *vain* thoughts: but thy law do I love.

114 Thou *art* my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

MEM.

97. *O how love I thy law!* &c.] The P. B. V., from the LXX., is, "Lord, what love, &c." In *v.* 99 the same V. omits "all," which is in the Hebrew and LXX.

98. *Thou through thy*, &c.] Or rather, "Thy commandments have made (sing. in Heb.) me wiser than mine enemies; for they (sing. in Heb., see marg.) are ever with me." The Commandments are considered as a Whole and One.

99, 100. *I have more understanding*, &c.] I have more understanding than my teachers, as taught of Thee (see *v.* 24): I understand more than ancients, *i.e.* aged men (Job xxxii. 7), famed for wisdom of the world, because I keep Thy law."

102. *for thou hast taught me*] "Thou, and not man, whose teaching is vain· Thou, whose teaching, as Thyself, is indescribably excellent."

103. *How sweet*, &c.] Cf. Ps. xix. 10. What happiness to have such a treasure and to understand it!

104. *understanding*] *i.e.* more and more continually; to discriminate between truth and falsehood.

every false way] See *v.* 29.

NUN.

105. *a lamp*, &c.] A lamp (so to say) by night: a sun by day: Prov. vi. 23.

108. *Accept*, &c.] "Accept my freewill offerings, of prayer and thanksgiving, coming out of a heart devoted to Thee." A *freewill offering* (Deut. xxiii. 23) was paid to God in gratitude for mercies received, not in obedience to law, or as a confession of sin: see Ps. l. 14, 23. *Offer*, *i.e.* as a sacrifice, *unto God thanksgiving*, &c. *Whoso offereth*, *i.e.* as a sacrifice, *praise*, &c. "This verse," says the Rev. Canon Hawkins, "is a fit petition with which to commence any service of prayer and praise to God."

109. *My soul*, &c.] See Judg. xii. 3; 1 S. xix. 5, xxviii. 21; Job xiii. 14. "Though I am always expecting and ready for death, through my enemies," &c. The image is taken from a traveller *carrying precious jewels in his hand* through dangerous paths: or from soldiers, *who carry their lives in their hands*, in this sense, that their lives depend upon their valour in fight: or, perhaps, from a game of chance, *Though I play with my life and risk it always*, &c. (see 87). Vaihinger interprets "*My soul* is *in* or *upon my hand*, *apt to fall off and perish*, as anything in or upon the hand easily falls off."

111. *Thy testimonies*, &c.] "I regard Thy testimonies as mine heritage, far more excellent than any other, for ever (*vv.* 33, 44, 98), for they are my chief joy."

SAMECH.

113. *vain thoughts*, &c.] The original

115 [e]Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

116 Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

118 Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit *is* falsehood.

119 Thou [t]puttest away all the wicked of the earth *like* dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

120 My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

ע AIN.

121 I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.

122 Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

123 Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.

125 I *am* thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

126 *It is* time for *thee*, LORD, to work: *for* they have made void thy law.

127 [f]Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

128 Therefore I esteem all *thy*

[e] Ps. 6. 8. Matt. 7. 23. [t] Heb. causest to cease. [f] Ps. 19. 10. Prov. 8. 11.

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word, with a different punctuation, occurs 1 K. xviii. 21, where it is rendered "opinions." The LXX. render it, in this place, "lawless men" (παρανόμους); the Syriac, "perversely-minded men;" the Chald., "thinkers of vain thoughts." Geier, in 'Poli Syn.' says, "The Psalmist describes mischievous speculations, subtle, useless, and perilous; heterodox pernicious teachings; opposed to truth revealed, and likely to interfere with its acceptance in its simplicity." The word probably expresses the concrete, and not the abstract: "doubters," "sceptics," "double-minded men." James i. 8, ἀνὴρ δίψυχος means "A double-minded man, divided between two opinions."

118. *Thou hast trodden down*, &c.] Or, rather, "Thou hast cast off and made of no account," so the LXX. and Theodotion, "all those that err from Thy statutes: for their teaching, false and treacherous, is a lie; and avails nought against Thee." Symm. ματαία γὰρ πᾶσα ἡ δολιότης αὐτῶν.

119. *Thou puttest away*, &c.] "Thou *puttest out of sight*, like useless dross, all the ungodly everywhere in the earth: therefore I love Thy testimonies, which are Thy declarations against ungodliness and wrong." See Jer. vi. 28—30; Ezek. xxii. 18—20; Mal. iii. 2: at first the pure ore and dross are united: but in the process of refining the dross is thrown off. In Exod. xii. 15, the leaven is *put away out* of the houses of the Israelites.

120. *My flesh*, &c.] See Job iv. 15; Isai. ii. 10: Jer. li. 27, the last in the Heb. "My flesh shudders," or "The hair of my flesh stands erect," through fear of Thee and of Thy judgments against wicked men. See Ex. xxxiv. 7.

AIN.

122. *Be surety*, &c.] See Gen. xliii. 9, xliv. 32; Isai. xxxviii. 14; Job xvii. 3. "Be my surety, or defence for good," *i.e.* "that it may be well with me." Deut. vi. 24, x. 13; Ps. lxxxvi. 17; Neh. v. 19.

123. *Mine eyes*, &c.] "Mine eyes fail me in looking for Thy salvation, and for the fulfilment of the promise guaranteed by Thy righteousness." Cf. 81, 82.

125. *I am thy servant*] "And have claim as a servant upon Thy help!"

126. *It is time*, &c.] "It is time for Thee to interfere and execute judgment;" Hebr. "to do:" Jer. xviii. 23, *deal thus with them:* Hebr. "Do with them." Or, the meaning may be, "It is time to work for Jehovah." The latter rendering is the more obvious and literal. The verse seems appropriate in a time of some great falling away from Jehovah.

127, 128. *Therefore*, &c.] Cf. 72. "Because the times are evil; because iniquity abounds: the more they tempt me with gold to leave Thy commandments, the more I love them above fine gold; and not some only, but all Thy precepts, how much so ever opposed to natural will, I esteem perfect."

128. *false way*] See 29, 104, &c. The rendering of the P. B. V., "above gold and precious stone," is probably from the LXX., who translate ὑπὲρ τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τοπάζιον.

precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way.

פ PE.

129 Thy testimonies *are* wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

132 Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, †as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

† Heb. *according to the custom towards those, &c.*

133 Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

134 Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

צ TZADDI.

137 Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments.

138 Thy testimonies *that* thou hast commanded *are* †righteous and very †faithful.

139 ᵍMy zeal hath †consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

† Heb. *righteousness.* † Heb. *faithfulness.* g Psal. 69. 9. John 2. 17. † Heb. *cut me off.*

PE.

129. *wonderful*] *i.e.* "miraculous, far exceeding aught conceived of man, supplying ever new instructions:" see 18, 27. On account of this incomparable excellence my soul "*keeps*," or rather "marks" and "meditates upon" them always!

130. *The entrance*, &c.] "As a beam of light illumines a dark chamber, Thy word admitted and understood illumines the soul of the simple." But the Hebrew word (פתח: lit. opening, unfolding, or revelation), for which "entrance" is put in the A.V., is rendered, as would seem rightly, by the LXX. and Vulg. δήλωσις, declaratio, "the declaration;" and the idea intended is, not so much that of the entrance of the word into the soul like light into a chamber; but rather the idea of its revelation to it, and comprehension by it, giving understanding and wisdom. The P.B.V. "when Thy word goeth forth," &c. suggests a wrong idea. The simple (Prov. xxii. 3) want the illumination of God's word.

131. *I opened my mouth*, &c.] A picture, it may be, of eager panting appetite for the heavenly food of God's law. See Ps. lxxxi. 10; Job xxix. 23.

132. *as Thou usest to do*, &c.] "As Thy rule is (and was) towards those who love Thy law." God's rule, of recompensing with good those who truly love Him, is meant. The prayers that follow 133, 134, 135, ask for such recompense.

133. *Order my steps*, &c.] "Order my steps in a right way, according to Thy word (*v.* 101), that I do not wander from it, and be enslaved of evil." Pss. xvii. 5, xix. 13, 14; Heb. xii. 13.

134. *Deliver me*, &c. "Deliver me from the oppression of evil men, that I be not tried above my power, and may keep Thy commandments with my whole heart."

135. *Make thy face*, &c.] Cf. Numb. vi. 25.

136. *Rivers*, &c.] Lam. iii. 48. Lit. "Mine eyes descend in rivers of waters, because men despise Thee and destroy themselves:" see 139; Jer. ix. 18; Philipp. iii. 18. "Most of the Easterns shed tears much more copiously than the people of Europe: I have myself seen Arabs shed tears like streams." 'Wanderings in the East,' Gadsby, Vol. I. p. 226.

TZADDI.

137. *Righteous*, &c.] Bp. Horne refers to the incident related in Gibbon (Vol. IV. p. 298, c. 46) of the Emperor Maurice in his last hours. As his five sons were successively murdered before his face, he had faith to say, "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments." How many Christians, in palace and cottage, since the days of Maurice, have said the same words, in the midst of trials the same or sharper!

138, 139. *Thy testimonies*, &c.] "The testimonies which Thou hast commanded are righteous (Heb. righteousness), and very faithful (Heb. faithfulness absolute), and counselled for man's extremest good: and my zeal for Thy law, (see Ps. lxix. 9), which men misunderstand and misinterpret, has almost worn me out."

140 Thy word *is* very [1]pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

141 I *am* small and despised: *yet* do not I forget thy precepts.

142 Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* the truth.

143 Trouble and anguish have [1]taken hold on me: *yet* thy commandments *are* my delights.

144 The righteousness of thy testimonies *is* everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

ק KOPH.

145 I cried with *my* whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

146 I cried unto thee; save me, [1]and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

148 Mine eyes prevent the *night* watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

149 Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness: O LORD, quicken me according to thy judgment.

150 They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

151 Thou *art* near, O LORD; and all thy commandments *are* truth.

152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

ר RESH.

153 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

154 Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.

155 Salvation *is* far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

156 [1]Great *are* thy tender mercies, O LORD: quicken me according to thy judgments.

157 Many *are* my persecutors and

[1] Or, *Many*.

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140. *very pure*] *i.e.* "well refined" and "tried" as metals by fire. The P. B. V. is "tried to the uttermost," see Pss. xii. 6, xix. 7, 8.

141. *small*] *i.e.* in estimation and repute, as the following word *despised* intimates; see Judg. vi. 15: or it may possibly mean "young," as the LXX., Vulg., Jer. and others render it. See *vv.* 9, 99, 100.

142. *Thy righteousness*, &c.] The original words expressing righteousness twice in this *v.* are not identical. The import is, "*The righteousness* of God by which He acts in revelation *is an ideal absolute righteousness*, and His law *the truth itself*." So again, *v.* 144, "*The absolute ideal righteousness* of Thy testimonies is for evermore: O grant me understanding of them, and I shall live indeed." This *v.* gives the reason for the devotion described in *v.* 141.

KOPH.

147. *I prevented*, &c.] "I cried unto Thee **early**, *i.e.* before others (De Wette, &c.), in the gloom, before the dawning of the morning: my fixed hope in Thy promise suffered me not to rest."

148. *Mine eyes*, &c.] "Before the watches (of the night) begin (or end), *i.e.* as one watch of the night ends and another begins, mine eyes make haste and wake always to meditate upon Thy word." See 140, 159. The night in early times was divided into 3 watches: the first, Lam. ii. 19: the second, Judg. vii. 19: the third, Exod. xiv. 24; 1 S. xi. 11.—Mark xiii. 35 (see too Acts xii. 4) seems to imply four, ὀψέ, μεσονύκτιον, ἀλεκτοροφωνία, πρωΐ. See also Pss. lxiii. 6, xc. 4.

149. *judgment*] *i.e.* "Thy righteous decree:" or, "according to Thy truth and righteousness." The plural is used *v.* 156.

150, 151. *They draw nigh*, &c.] "as in battle array," or, "with hostile intent:" but "Thou art near (Ps. lxix. 18) with ready succour: Thy commandments, whatever Thine enemies may aver, are truth itself; and (*v.* 152) *concerning them*, *i.e.* from intimate experience of them, I say, eternally precious; and whoever trusts in them is *for ever safe*." The divine excellence of Jehovah's statutes assures the Psalmist of their eternal duration. *Nigh* in the first versicle is opposed to *far* in the second. See Matt. v. 18; Luke xxi. 33.

RESH.

154. *Plead my cause*, &c.] See note on Ps. xxxv. 1: also Pss. xliii. 1, lxxiv. 22.

155. *Salvation is far*, &c.] God forces not upon any His salvation: if it be far from any one—he alone is to blame.

157. *Many*, &c.] See Ps. iii. 1, 2, 3.

mine enemies; *yet* do I not decline from thy testimonies.

158 I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

159 Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.

† Heb. *The beginning of thy word* is *true.*

160 † Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

ש SCHIN.

161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I hate and abhor lying: *but* thy law do I love.

164 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and † nothing shall offend them.

† Heb. *they shall have no stumbling-block.*

166 LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways *are* before thee.

ת TAU.

169 Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

171 My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.

173 Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.

174 I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law *is* my delight.

175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.

176 I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

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158. *I beheld*, &c.] "I beheld (and behold) the wicked and treacherous, and was (and am) mightily indignant." Keble renders, "The recreants I survey, And loathing turn away." Apostates from divine truth (see Jer. iii. 20, xii. 1) are meant: compare Ps. cxxxix. 21.

160. *Thy word*, &c.] Or, "The **sum** (Ps. cxxxix. 17) of Thy word (is) truth, and every one of Thy righteous judgments (is) for ever." The sum total, so to say, and each unit of the sum, of God's commandments is truth and perfection. Delitzsch remarks that, as the psalm draws to an end, its phrase becomes more and more urgently supplicatory. Vaihinger too notices all through the psalm a progress of ideas and sentiment, which is felt but can hardly be expressed. In this section the words *quicken me* are three times repeated, 154, 156, 159.

SCHIN.

161. *but my heart*, &c.] "dreads any violation of Thy law far above the force of Prince or Potentate."

162. *I rejoice*, &c.] "My dread (161) is coupled with joy (111), as of one that findeth spoil." Judg. v. 30; Isai. ix. 3.

164, 165. *Seven times*, &c.] Not only morning and evening, not thrice only (Ps. lv. 17), but seven times, *i.e.* again and again, and many times (Pss. xii. 6, lxxix. 12: Lev. xxvi. 18, 24; Gen. iv. 15; Prov. xxiv. 16), each day so as to hallow the day, the Psalmist thanks God for His word; which is a fountain of peace inexhaustible (*v.* 165), and security against offence or stumbling.

166. *LORD, I have hoped*, &c.] "I have waited anxiously," as Jacob, in Gen. xlix. 18.

168. *I have kept*, &c.] "as of One Who knows all my secret ways, and words, and thoughts:" Ps. cxxxix. 3.

TAU.

169, 170. *give me understanding*, &c.: *deliver me*, &c.] "Give me understanding, more and more, of Thy law, that I may be meet for trial close and pressing: deliver me, as Thou only canst do, according to promise, at fitting time."

173, 174, 175. *Let thine hand*, &c.] "according to Thy promise to Thy servants always (Ps. l. 23): I have desired (and desire) deliverance out of this evil world: aid me by Thy righteous judgments against mine enemies, and I will praise Thee more and more."

176. *I have gone astray*, &c.] "I have

PSALM CXX.

1 *David prayeth against Doeg,* 3 *reproveth his tongue,* 5 *complaineth of his necessary conversation with the wicked.*

A Song of degrees.

IN my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue.

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wandered far from Thee and from home, as a sheep lost and ready to perish in a wilderness. Seek Thy servant lest he be not able of himself to seek Thee: bring him again to Thy fold, for his heart is Thine and he is longing to hear Thy voice." See Isai. liii. 6; Jer. l. 6; John x. 14—16. As *vv.* 67, 110 plainly describe the spiritual inner state of the Psalmist, Vaihinger supposes this verse to refer to the outward circumstances of his life.

PSALMS OF DEGREES.

Some imagine these fifteen Psalms of Degrees, Pss. cxx.—cxxxiv., to have been chanted by pilgrims returning from exile at Babylon. But the title would rather be Psalms of Ascent (one), than of Ascents (many): scarcely any psalm of the collection has a natural connection with the subject of a return from exile, and some are irreconcileable with it. The inscriptions, too, which assign some of the psalms to David, and one to Solomon, form an argument of weight against this opinion. Others (Ewald, Thenius, &c.) suppose the psalms written at various periods for pilgrims making the periodical journeys with song and music (Isai. xxx. 29; cf. Gen. xxxi. 27) to Jerusalem, commanded by the law, Deut. xvi. 16. This is the opinion of Aq., Symm., and Theod., who render the title respectively "a song for the goings up" (*ᾆσμα εἰς τὰς ἀναβάσεις*), and "a song of the goings up" (*ᾆσμα τῶν ἀναβάσεων*). It is the opinion generally received; and Pss. cxxi. cxxii., and some others, fall in with it naturally: it is supported too by the indisputable use of the Hebrew word from which the title "Psalm of Degrees" (or ascents) is derived (Ex. xxxiv. 24; 1 K. xii. 27; Ps. cxxii. 4), in the sense required by the explanation. But the contents of many of the psalms, as cxxiv. cxxv. cxxvi., are scarcely reconcileable with it: and generally there is little in any one of them to suggest such an explanation. The journeys or ascents of pilgrims to Jerusalem are scarcely alluded to in Scripture (see 1 S. i. 3; Luke ii. 42; John vii. 8); and a collection of psalms for use in them could scarcely, without other explanation, be so designated. Early tradition says that the psalms were written for chanting upon the fifteen steps which led from the court of the women in the temple to the court of the men of Israel. So Luther, Grotius, &c., after the LXX. (*ᾠδὴ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν*), and Vulg. (Canticum Graduum). But the steps supposed to be referred to are not mentioned in Scripture. Gesenius's opinion, see his 'Thesaurus' (in v: מעלה), is, that the characteristic of these psalms is a peculiar mode of repeating a significant phrase. A word employed at the end of a verse is repeated and intensified, so to say, in the next; as in Ps. cxxi. 1, 2, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help; my help cometh from the Lord," &c. But this theory is applicable only by a kind of forcing to some of the psalms, as to cxxviii. cxxix. cxxx. cxxxi. Thrupp, Vol. II. p. 264, suggests that they were composed for the encouragement of the workmen engaged in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah; but it is doubtful if the title "Song of Ascents," without addition, could signify a song of ascents *to the walls*.

The psalms seem written, or put into their present form, after the exile, to which as of recent occurrence there are many allusions. Above it was remarked that Pss. xc.—c., ci.—cvii., cviii.—cxviii., are collections of psalms, in some respects like this collection, for special occasions and uses.

We may notice the following characteristics of nearly all these psalms: sweetness and tenderness; a sad pathetic tone; brevity; an absence generally of the ordinary parallelism; and something of a quick trochaic rhythm.

PSALM CXX.

The opposition of the Samaritans, or of the Moabites, Ammonites, and other near tribes, who set themselves against the rebuilding of the temple and re-establishment of the people at Jerusalem, seems to many commentators to have given occasion to this psalm. See Ezra iii. iv. &c.; Neh. ii. iv. vi. &c. But it carries on the face of it the notion of individual, hardly bearable, trial, more than that of national distress, and a people's cry to God. The trial is like that of David, 1 S. xxi. 7, xxii. 9, &c. (mentioned in the contents of the A.V.), and is inflicted by a slanderous tongue: it is soothed by the recollection that God hears the cry of the suppliant, and answers it always.

1. *In my distress,* &c.] The Psalmist recollects earlier instances of Jehovah's answer to a cry of distress: or the past tense includes

3 ¹What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be †done unto thee, thou false tongue?

4 ¹Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

5 Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, *that* I dwell in the tents of Kedar!

6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

7 I *am* ¹*for* peace: but when I speak, they *are* for war.

¹ Or, *What shall the deceitful tongue give unto thee?* or, *What shall it profit thee?* † Heb. *added.* ¹ Or, It is as *the sharp arrows of the mighty* man, *with coals of juniper.*

¹ Or, *a man of peace.*

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the present; and the import is, "In my distress I cried and do now cry, and He heard me and now hears or will hear me;" *v.* 2 contains the cry or prayer: *vv.* 3, 4, the hint that God hears.

3, 4. *What shall be given*, &c.] The A.V. may be thus paraphrased, "What punishment shall be assigned to thee, or what shall be done or added unto thee, *thou false tongue*, in recompense for misery caused?" or, the rendering may be, "What shall (God) give unto thee, and what shall (He) add unto thee?"—Answer; "Sharp arrows (Ps. xlv. 5) wielded by a mighty one" (see Ps. cxxvii. 4; Jer. l. 9), "and burning coals of juniper;" see Ps. cxl. 10; Prov. xxv. 22. Thus the punishment of the slanderous tongue is appropriate: for itself is *a sharp sword;* Ps. lvii. 4; "a pointed arrow," Jer. ix. 8; "and it burns like hell-fire," James iii. 6. The root of the retem or broom (in the A.V. *juniper*) is used for fire in the desert, and retains its heat, says Jerome, who lived in Palestine, for a year. See Burckhardt, 'Travels,' Vol. II. p. 791; Robinson's 'Palestine,' Vol. I. p. 299. The same shrub is mentioned, 1 K. xix. 4; Job xxx. 4.

A difference of opinion, it may be noticed, exists respecting the interpretation of almost every verse and word of this psalm.

5. *Woe is me, that*, &c.] Mesech (see Note below) is between the Black Sea and the Caspian, Kedar is in Arabia. They stand here for remote barbarous hordes. Similarly, we should speak (De Wette) of a dwelling with Turks and Hottentots.

7. *I am for peace*, &c.] Heb. "I (am) peace." Ps. cix. 4 (Heb.), "I (am) prayer."

Reuss remarks that the conclusion of the psalm is abrupt, and leaves the reader in ignorance of the issue of the trial, which had lasted, *v.* 6, "too long," or "very long." But the strong faith expressed in *v.* 1 casts its ray of comfort to the end.

NOTE on PSALM CXX. 5.

Mesech is the name of one of the sons of Japheth, Gen. x. 2: the people, Mesech, are mentioned in connection with Javan, Tubal, &c., as trading with Tyre in slaves and brass, Ezek. xxvii. 13; and again (Ezek. xxxii. 26), in connection with Asshur, Edom, Elam, as hurled into the pit for the woe which they had caused upon the earth: again (Ezek. xxxviii. 2), in connection with Gog and Magog, the northern peoples (xxxviii. 15), Mesech is threatened with destruction if he comes down as a cloud (xxxviii. 9, 16) upon Israel. These traits point to a northern barbarous tribe: and the common opinion is that Mesech is the people whom the Greeks and Romans call Moschi, Herod. III. 94. These lived upon the mountain-ranges south of, and adjoining, Caucasus and the south-east borders of the Black Sea. The ranges of Caucasus are rich in veins of brass (Bochart, 'Geogr.' pp. 207, 208), and the adjoining countries, Georgia and Circassia, always have been infamous for slave-traffic. Kedar is the name of one of the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 13: the flocks of *Kedar* and rams of *Nebaioth* are mentioned in connection, Isai. lx. 7. The sons of Kedar dwelt in dark tents, S. of S. i. 5, as the Bedouin of the present day; under princes or chiefs, Ezek. xxvii. 21 were a warlike people and skilled in archery, Isai. xxi. 15. Nebaioth can hardly be other than the tribe of the Nabathæans, who gave their name to a large part of Arabia, Joseph. 'Ant.' B. I. ch. 12, § 4, and dwelt, according to Pliny and Strabo, in Arabia Petræa. They are mentioned in 1 Macc. v. 25. All the traits of Kedar correspond with those of an Arabian tribe; its exact locality is not known. See the 'Dict. of Bible,' in vv. *Mesech* and *Kedar:* or Rosenm. 'Geog.' Vol. I. Pt. i. p. 248, and Vol. III. p. 27.

PSALM CXXI.

The great safety of the godly, who put their trust in God's protection.

A Song of degrees.

‖ Or, *Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come?*
a Ps. 124. 8.

I ‖ WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

2 *a* My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD *is* thy keeper: the LORD *is* thy shade upon thy right hand.

6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD shall preserve thee

PSALM CXXI.

It is possible (p. 455) that this psalm may have been chanted by pilgrims at the first sight of the mountains of Judea, or at the conclusion of one of the periodical journeys to Jerusalem. But we know of no circumstances attending those pilgrimages which should call forth such strong expressions of fear and of confidence. The intensity of faith and of need, which the psalm exhibits, more naturally suggests some occasion on which an individual, suffering acute trial, appeals to God with an absolute trust in His protection.

Steps or *ascents* of idea, see p. 455, in the psalm are manifest. "Whence cometh my help? It comes from Jehovah! from the Maker of heaven and earth." "He will not suffer thy foot to slip. He that keepeth thee will not slumber. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps," &c.

The change of persons in *vv.* 1, 2, 3 and 4, suggests the notion of two speakers: the first, the Psalmist, in *vv.* 1, 2, propounding his difficulty and hope: the second, in *vv.* 3, 4, &c., dilating upon the latter topic, and appealing to experience in proof of God's care of His people; since first He declared Himself Israel's Keeper, Gen. xxviii. 15, and the eternal Guardian of His chosen, Deut. xxxii. 10. But rather, the first two verses contain the half-doubting, half-confident sentiment of the Psalmist: and the following verses to the end, the assurance given to him by the Spirit of God strengthening his wavering faith. The word "keep" is repeated eight times in the last seven verses of this psalm. In *v.* 7, the A.V. substitutes *preserve* for "keep."

1. *I will lift up*, &c.] There is a question, as in the marg.; "I lift up mine eyes to the hills (or mountains), asking, Whence cometh my help?" The allusion may be to Isai. lii. 7: see also Nahum i. 15: the Psalmist turns his eyes, some say, towards the distant mountains bounding his horizon, to see if any messenger appears upon them bringing tidings of deliverance: in support of the allusion to Isaiah it may be urged that *v.* 4 contains a manifest reference to Isai. v. 27. But rather the mountains round about Jerusalem, in the midst of which Jehovah dwells, and from whence comes His blessing, are intended. See Pss. iii. 4, xiv. 7, lxxxvii. 1, cxxv. 2, cxxxiii. 3, &c. The Psalmist, in exile it may be, turns towards these distant mountains of his beloved country, hoping for aid.

2. *My help*, &c.] It comes from Jehovah Who made heaven and earth, and, unlike vain idols, is omnipotent to save: see Pss. cxv. 15, cxxiv. 8, &c.

3. *He will not suffer*, &c.] The expression seems less confident than an absolute assertion. "He will not" (be sure) "suffer thy foot to be moved (*i.e.* to slip): He that keepeth thee will not" (be sure) "slumber:" then, in *v.* 4, absolutely, "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps:" *Behold*, *i.e.* "the truth undoubted," that Jehovah sleeps not, &c.: "slumber" and "sleep" are not contrasted; the phrase is stronger than if one word only were used.

4. *Israel*] Emphatic.

5. *The LORD is*, &c.] Shade, in a burning climate, is a word so naturally equivalent to defence, that it seems here to be put simply for it. See Num. xiv. 9, *their defence* (Heb. shade) *is departed from them*: Ps. xci. 1. So the words are equivalent to "the Lord is thy defence at thy right hand," as in P. B. V. A guardian attendant is posted at the right hand: see Pss. xvi. 8, lxxiii. 23, cix. 31, cx. 5. In Ps. cix. 6, Satan, *the adversary*, is imaged in this proper place of protector. See the note there.

6. *The sun shall not smite thee*, &c.] A stroke from the sun's rays is fatal, 2 K. iv. 18, 19. See too Jonah iv. 8; Judith viii. 2, 3. There is no difficulty in supposing that the noxious effect of the moon's rays, now generally believed, should have been alluded to in this place. It is contrary to the genius of Scripture to say that the moon is introduced here simply on account of a parallelism (Hupfeld) or attraction, and, as in Josh. x. 12, 13; Isai. xxiv. 23; Ps. lxxii. 5, &c., to supplement the mention of the sun. In all those places the mention of the moon is introduced with definite intent:

from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

PSALM CXXII.

1 *David professeth his joy for the church,* 6 *and prayeth for the peace thereof.*

A Song of degrees of David.

I WAS glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:

4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testi-

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but in this place, unless it were understood to exercise a harmful power like that of the sun, without any propriety. For the proof of a noxious influence exerted by the moon, see Leopolt, 'India Missions,' p. 7; Curzon's 'Travels,' p. 36; Rosenm. 'Altes und Neues Morg.' IV. p. 108, and other authorities in Delitzsch.

8. *thy going out and thy coming in*] The original of the phrase seems to occur Deut. xxviii. 6. See 1 S. xxix. 6; 2 S. iii. 25; 1 K. iii. 7; Acts i. 21, for similar uses of it. The import is, "thy daily life."

PSALM CXXII.

The psalm is not attributed to David by the LXX., nor by the Vulg., Syr., Chald. versions: the words "of" or "by David" are also omitted in some Hebrew MSS. The Psalmist is one of a company of pilgrims; and recounts, *v.* 1, his delight at the proposal of a joint visit to Jerusalem and God's house; *v.* 2, his wonder and admiration at the first glimpse of the holy city closely compact and one; *v.* 4, his recollections of the glories of the kingdom of which Jerusalem is the centre; the journeys of the tribes, the thrones in it for judgment of David's house, &c. He adds a prayer, *v.* 6, for the happiness and peace of this centre of union and brotherhood; on account of brethren and friends, *v.* 8, inhabiting it; on account of the house of God, *v.* 9, standing in it.

The contents of the psalm do not bespeak David as its author. The first and ninth verses lose all interest if the Temple of Jehovah be not standing. The burst of wonder at first sight of the city seems unsuitable to David the king. The mention of the *house of David*, *v.* 5, and the prayer for the *peace of Jerusalem*, *v.* 7, its *walls and palaces*, seem to necessitate a later date. On the other hand, a date after the exile seems inconsistent with the address, *v.* 3, to Jerusalem in its "beauty and compactness;" with the thrones, *v.* 5, of David's house still standing; with the description of the prosperous city, *v.* 7; and with the prayer, *v.* 9, for the *house* of God. Those who adopt this view consider all the tenses in *vv.* 4, 5 as *past*, and descriptive of the ancient glories of David's kingdom; and so give up a principal beauty of the psalm: and they escape the argument derived from the address in *v.* 3, by rendering the words, "O Jerusalem that art *rebuilt* as a city," &c., introducing an idea anomalous, unpoetical, and somewhat inconsistent with the description of the city in *v.* 7. No theory of the date of the psalm is free from objections: the tenses (in the original), specially in *vv.* 4, 5, already referred to, on any supposition, occasion obscurity. But there is good authority (Rosenm., &c.) for rendering them as in our version.

2. *Our feet shall stand*, &c.] Heb. "Our feet stood or stand (or, have become standing, are still standing) within thy gates, O Jerusalem." "We stand, we pause, at the entrance of thy gates;"—at the scene, that is, of the exclamation and memories, *v.* 4, which follow.

3. *Jerusalem is builded*, &c.] Rather, "O Jerusalem, built up, or well built, as a city compact in unity." Symm. συνάφειαν ἔχουσαν ὁμοῦ: LXX. οἰκοδομουμένη ὡς πόλις ἧς ἡ μετοχὴ αὐτῆς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό. Dean Stanley, 'S. and P.' p. 172, explains how expressive this description is of the actual city of Jerusalem; and much more, in all likelihood, of the old city shut in close by deep ravines, rising aloft above them, and separate from all around it, and *compact and one*. Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 627, illustrates further the expression of the psalm: "The rocky regions lying in between these valleys is the platform of the ancient Jerusalem—the whole of it. Within their limits there was nothing else, and beyond them the city never extended. Thus I understand the language of Josephus when he is speaking of Jerusalem, *one and entire*." The words of the orig. will bear various meanings.

4. *Whither the tribes go up*, &c.] If the date of the psalm be, as seems nearly certain, after David and Solomon, the *tribes* must be, not the undivided tribes, but such portions of them, out of all lands, as still observed the law of Moses; Exod. xxiii. 17; Deut. xii. 4, 5, xvi. 16. See too 1 K. xii. 27. Mary and Joseph, Luke ii. 41, 42, went up to Jerusalem in obedience to this law. The words

mony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

5 For there [t]are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

7 Peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee.

9 Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

PSALM CXXIII.

1 *The godly profess their confidence in God,* 3 *and pray to be delivered from contempt.*

A Song of degrees.

UNTO thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

2 Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

3 Have mercy upon us, O LORD,

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unto the testimony of Israel should rather be rendered "a testimony to Israel," *i.e.* a custom or law to Israel: or, a testimony to Israel's covenant.

5. *For there are set,* &c.] Such thrones *e.g.* as David sat upon, 2 S. xv. 2, and Solomon, 1 K. iii. 16, vii. 7. In Dean Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' Vol. II. p. 195, the original gorgeous throne of Solomon is described. The reason is given why the tribes flock to Jerusalem: see Deut. xvii. 9. The capital of the nation was also, by divine appointment, the centre of religious worship.

6. *Pray for the peace,* &c.] "Pray for the peace, *i.e.* prosperity, of the Holy City rising beautifully in sight. May all that love thee be prosperous." The latter clause of the verse is part of the wish or prayer which goes on in *v.* 7, *Peace be within thy walls,* &c. The alliteration and play upon the words peace, Jerusalem, prosperity, cannot be preserved.

9. *I will seek thy good*] *i.e.* on all these accounts, brethren, friends, the house of God, and for no selfish ends, Jer. xxix. 7, "I will strive for thy good in prayer."

PSALM CXXIII.

An Israelite suffering, in common with his people, *v.* 2, sharpest affliction and scorn, and despairing of aid from man, prays for succour; with an absolute confidence in Jehovah, to Whom he looks for mercy, as servants look to their lord, or maiden to her mistress. Hengsten. and others suggest the circumstances narrated Neh. ii. 19, and iv. 1—4, as suitable to the composition of this psalm; and the words used in *v.* 4, *Hear, O our God, for we are despised,* certainly recal *v.* 3 of the psalm. Lyra suggests, in preference, the times of persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes. The first emergency seems almost too slight to have inspired such deep passion of sorrow and humiliation as the psalm discovers. Antiochus' persecution would have suggested images of violence, wrong, and savage murder, rather than of scorn and contempt. The expression *the LORD our God,* or "Jehovah our God," common to this psalm, *v.* 2, and to the last, *v.* 9, seems to shew some connection between them; and the peculiar use of the Hebrew expletive in *v.* 4, which the A. V. does not express, recalls the similar use of it in Ps. cxx. 6, and also suggests a common authorship. The psalm exemplifies the idea of a Psalm of Degrees noticed in p. 455. The play upon the word *eyes* in *vv.* 1, 2, and reiteration of phrases in *vv.* 3, 4, *Have mercy upon us,* &c., cannot be accidental. The deep pathos and intensity of faith and of supplication in it shew it to have been written in a time of actual pressing trial: of what kind we cannot say, but of long continuance, even to the uttermost wearying, *vv.* 3, 4.

2. *Behold, as the eyes,* &c.] Why to the *hand* of master or mistress? Hengsten. supposes the image to be that of slaves enduring chastisement at the hand of master or mistress, and watching it to see if any mitigation of punishment is soon to come; in direct allusion to Sarah's chastisement of Hagar, Gen. xvi. 6. But the idea of harsh chastisement thus introduced is unsuitable to the spirit of the beautiful psalm. As slaves watch the hand of master or mistress to comprehend their lightest wish, and execute it with promptitude, so suffering Israel looks to Jehovah, to discern His pleasure, to acquiesce implicitly in His will, and, at the last, to obtain mercy. The eye rather than the hand should be watched, according to Terence, 'Adelphi,' II. i. 16, "cave oculos a meis oculis quoquam dimoveas;" but it is perfectly intelligible that the hand should be watched for a sign, as in the places referred to in Burder, 'Oriental Customs,' Vol. I. p. 122. See also Pococke, 'Description of the East,' Vol. I. p. 15.

3, 4. *Have mercy upon us,* &c.] The A.V. does not shew how the expressions used

have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

4 Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, *and* with the contempt of the proud.

PSALM CXXIV.

The church blesseth God for a miraculous deliverance.

A Song of degrees of David.

IF *it had* not *been* the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say;

2 If *it had* not *been* the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

3 Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:

4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:

5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

6 Blessed *be* the LORD, who hath not given us *as* a prey to their teeth.

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in *vv.* 3, 4 continually intensify the idea of suffering introduced: *v.* 3, *We are exceedingly filled with contempt; v.* 4, *Our soul is exceedingly filled*, yea fulfilled, *with the scorn* —the scorn (I say), *of those that are at ease, and with the* bitter *contempt of the proud.* The word denoting *those that are at ease* is used (Isai. xxxii. 9, 11; Amos vi. 1) for "those that are at ease when ease is sin," or "the wanton ones:" the transition from which meaning to that of "proud and arrogant ones" is easy. The word rendered *proud* expresses the before-implied idea of "proud and arrogant ones" directly and strongly. The psalm, it is said, ends abruptly, and leaves the Psalmist (as far as we know) filled even to satiety and weariness *with contempt.* But the strong faith and hope expressed at the commencement (see *v.* 2, *until that he have mercy upon us*) suggest an assurance that help came in time. See Psalm cxx. p. 455.

PSALM CXXIV.

The title ascribes the psalm to David, but the words "of or by David" are omitted in some MSS., in the LXX., Vulg., Syr., and other translations, and in most of the Fathers. "The spirit of the psalm, its confident trust in God, its energy, rapidity and phraseology," says Luther in his comment, "are entirely Davidic." The circumstances of the Edomite war might easily have furnished the occasion for it. But general opinion (Delitzsch, &c.) inclines to a much later author writing after David's manner. Hitzig (of course) refers the psalm to the Maccabees: see 1 Macc. xiii. 20, &c. It paints, with singular vividness, an escape of the community of Israel, by miracle and by Jehovah's single aid, from a terrible peril: in a free, joyous, confident spirit, as of one relieved suddenly from a great pressure: with a multiplicity of images that adds to the reality of the picture, and transports us to the scene of an actual emergency and singular escape. The occasion which gave birth to it is a matter of conjecture; but Jewish story is full of incidents (*e.g.* 2 K. xviii. 13; Isai. xxxvii.: Esth. ix.) of which any one might have suggested it: and life is full of circumstances which draw us to it, as the fitting expression of wonder and thankfulness for miraculous aid, in perils out of which was no escape.

The psalm is an example of a Psalm of Ascents, nearly in the sense described above, p. 455. "They had swallowed us up quick —the waters had overwhelmed us—the stream had gone over our soul," *vv.* 3, 4. "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare— the snare is broken," &c. Luther's hymn "War Gott nicht mit uns dieser Zeit," &c. is a well-known imitation (to mention only one) of the psalm.

3, 4, 5. *Then they had swallowed*, &c.] *Then*, see Ps. cxix. 92, is not a note of time, but an inference; "If it had not been Jehovah who was on our side, then surely they had swallowed us up quick; then the waters had overwhelmed us; then the proud swelling waters had gone over our soul." *Quick*, *i.e.* alive, as the pit in Num. xvi. 30, 32, 33 swallowed up *quick* Korah, Dathan, &c.: or, as "the grave" swallows up its victims, *whole*, Prov. i. 12: or, as a wild beast devours its prey, almost, so to say, "alive," before the vital spark is out, as Theodoret explains the place:—"We should have perished without sepulture, and been swallowed up alive as men devoured of wild beasts." But the first interpretation seems the best, as the words of the book of Numbers are quoted; and *v.* 6 introduces a new image, of escape from the jaws of a wild beast. *The waters:* see Ps. xviii. 4, 16, for a similar figure of imminent peril, in a psalm allowed by all to be David's: also Ps. cxliv. 7; Isai. viii. 7. *The stream*, Heb. "a stream," *i.e.* a torrent swollen by sudden rains.

4. *our soul*] See Ps. lxix. 1. Not only our bodies, but our head (see Ps. xxxviii. 4), and life: each expression adds force to the preceding.

7 Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

8 [a] Our help *is* in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

PSALM CXXV.

1 *The safety of such as trust in God.* 4 *A prayer for the godly, and against the wicked.*

A Song of degrees.

THEY that trust in the LORD *shall be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed, *but* abideth for ever.

2 *As* the mountains *are* round about Jerusalem, so the LORD *is* round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

3 For the rod of † the wicked shall

† Heb *wickedness.*

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5. *Then the proud waters,* &c.] The waters are endowed with life, and painted in the act of overwhelming us. Perowne quotes Æsch. 'P. V.' 717.

7. *broken*] Not by any act of man, but through the help of God, our only help always.

Note the image of a glad bird escaping, unexpectedly and against all hope, from the *broken* net of the fowler. The original words and rhythm have a force which no literal translation can represent: "We escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler; the snare was broken, and we! we escaped!"

8. *made heaven and earth*] See Pss. cxxi. 2, cxxxiv. 3.

PSALM CXXV.

The circumstances of this psalm are similar to those of Psalm cxxiii. Israel is oppressed by the yoke of tyrants: the trial to faith is sharp: the faithful are daily separating from the traitors. Those who stand fast in their allegiance shall triumph in the end: Jehovah protects His people, as the hills stand round Jerusalem and guard it for evermore.

The events narrated Neh. vi. &c. seem to many to have given occasion to the psalm; and some coincidences of expression (Kay) are noticed between it and the book of Nehemiah; see *v.* 3, and Neh. ii. 8, 18, v. 19, &c. But the Samaritan faction scarcely exercised such a sway over the chosen people as the expressions of *v.* 3 seem to intimate: and, generally, the incidents referred to are tame and commonplace, when contrasted with the outburst in this psalm of passionate energy and faith. Many words in it undoubtedly point to a late date; so Moll, Delitzsch, &c. The repetition of certain words and phrases in it, as of the words *for ever* in *vv.* 1, 2; *round about* in *v.* 2; *righteous* in *v.* 3; *good* in *v.* 4, reminds of the theory of Gesenius.

1. *They that trust in the LORD,* &c.] Or, rather. "They that trust in Jehovah are as Mount Zion; **it shall not be moved: it stands fast for ever,** as the solid earth." Pss. xciii. 1, civ. 5.

2. *As the mountains,* &c.] Literally, "**Jerusalem, mountains** are round about her; and Jehovah is round about His people," &c. See Zech. ii. 4, 5; 2 K. vi. 17. "The Holy City," says Robinson, 'B. R.,' Vol. I. p. 382, "is situated upon a broad and elevated promontory within the fork of the two valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom. All round are higher hills; on the east the mount of Olives; on the south the hill of Evil Counsel rising directly from the vale of Hinnom; on the west the ground rises gently to the borders of the great wady; while on the north a bend of the ridge connected with the Mount of Olives bounds the prospect at the distance of more than a mile; to the south-west the view is somewhat more open." Are the *hills* mentioned in this extract alluded to in the psalm, or the more distant but still near *mountains* Nebi Samuel, El Ram, and Tel el Fulil, and in the further distance the mountains of Moab? Dean Stanley, 'S. and P.,' p. 173, 1st ed., inclines to the latter opinion, and also Thomson, 'L. and B.,' p. 667, ed. 1864. The words of Josephus, 'Bell. Jud.' VI. v. 1, too, quoted by Dean Stanley, favour this idea: συνήχει δὲ ἥ τε Περαία καὶ τὰ πέριξ ὄρη, κ.τ.λ. The comparison in the psalm seems to require a closely environing continuous mountain-chain such as that of Olivet, &c.: it requires besides the *manifest appearance* of a guardianship and protection such as the nearest mountains must afford: but still the judgment of two travellers acquainted with the spot can scarcely be set aside.

3. *For the rod,* &c.] The word translated *rod* means rather "sceptre" or "power," as Gen. xlix. 10; Ps. xlv. 6. *The wicked* (Heb. wickedness) are so termed in contrast with "the righteous" or "chosen" people; the *lot of the righteous* is the land of promise portioned out to the tribes, Josh. xviii. 10: "And Joshua cast lots (Heb. a lot) for them in Shiloh," &c.; Ps. xvi. 5. "The power of the oppressors, the enemies of God's people, shall not abide (Isai. xxv. 10, Heb.) upon the land. The trial is to prove faith, not to endanger it by a too sharp pressure: lest, overcome by this, even the faithful put forth a hand (as in

not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

4 Do good, O LORD, unto *those that be* good, and to *them that are* upright in their hearts.

5 As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: *but* peace *shall be* upon Israel.

PSALM CXXVI.

1 *The church, celebrating her incredible return out of captivity,* 4 *prayeth for, and prophesieth the good success thereof.*

A Song of degrees.

WHEN the LORD [1] turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

[1] Heb. *returned the returning of Zion.*

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the hea-

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Gen. iii. 22) to forbidden pleasure: or (as in Exod. xxii. 8), to contamination: through force of custom gradually persuading to sinful compliance, or through despair of good, as the Psalmist (lxxiii. 13, 14: see too Ps. xxxvii.; Num. xiii. 30) describes some in his day who witnessed the prosperity of wicked men."

4, 5. *Do good, O LORD,* &c.] Prayer. "Do Thou, Jehovah, quickly, and before it is too late, *v.* 3, shew mercy to those who are true-hearted and stedfast." Then, *v.* 5, the prayer changes to a prophecy: "All that turn aside from the straight path and wander into bypaths (see Judg. v. 6, *In the days of Shamgar . . . travellers walked through byways.* The word rendered *byways* is the word used in the psalm), that stray from Thee and incline to Thy foes, Jehovah will destroy with the workers of iniquity; or, as workers of iniquity."

The word *shall lead them forth* seems to bear the meaning above expressed, of "leading into the ways of destruction," or "destroying:" see Pss. lviii. 8, cix. 23. A somewhat similar denunciation Matt. vii. 22, xxiv. 51: the wavering, unstedfast, half-hearted disciple shall be as the hypocrite and rebellious.

The concluding words, *peace shall be upon Israel,* should not be connected with what precedes. They are a blessing upon the true Israel: a confident promise of peace and protection at the last, from all oppression and wrong, to those who trust in Jehovah, and are true and upright in heart, *v.* 4; and are secure always like the immovable rock Zion, *v.* 1.

PSALM CXXVI.

A psalm of thanksgiving for return from captivity, *v.* 1, accompanied by an ardent prayer for, *v.* 4, and confident hope of, *vv.* 5, 6, its quick and full completion. The miracle of return was like a dream; it could scarcely be credited for its wonder. It filled the heart of the chosen with joy and thankfulness, and the heathen, who looked on, with astonishment. Yet some only—see the books of Ezra and Nehem., passim—in comparison with its former multitude of inhabitants, as yet occupy the land: the Psalmist, *v.* 4, ardently entreats of God to restore the remainder; and confidently predicts (*vv.* 5, 6) the accomplishment of his prayer; a harvest of joy and rejoicing after a seed-time of sorrow; and prosperous many days, after the short sharp time of trial.

Ps. lxxxv. contains a similar thanksgiving for a restoration from exile, and prayer for its full accomplishment.

The repetition in this psalm of certain words and expressions, *vv.* 1, 4, 2, 3, and 6, which constitute a sort of burden to the song, reminds us faintly of Gesenius' account of Psalms of Degrees, p. 455. See notes upon *vv.* 1, 4, &c.

1. *turned again the captivity*] The phrase so rendered in the A.V. is not identical with that similarly rendered in *v.* 4. But, as above said, the reiteration of principal words and phrases seems a characteristic of these psalms of degrees: and it can scarcely be doubted that originally the two expressions, which now closely resemble each other, were the same. It may be added that it is hard to give any satisfactory account of the Hebrew word שִׁיבַת, which is the received reading (though not in all MSS.), and which is rendered *captivity* in this verse.

The meaning is: When God *turned the captivity*, or changed the captivity of Zion to freedom; when the edict of Cyrus went forth allowing the captives to return, it was so unexpected, it was so miraculous (see the edict in Ezra i.), that we deemed the accomplishment of ancient prophecy (see Jerem. xxv. 12, xxix. 10) a dream. See the remarks below, at *v.* 4.

we were like them that dream] So Polybius describes the joy of the Greeks rescued unexpectedly from the Macedonians: "Most of the men," he says, "could scarcely believe the news, but imagined themselves in a dream as they listened to what was said, so extraordinary and miraculous it seemed to them."

then, The LORD †hath done great things for them.

3 The LORD hath done great things for us; *whereof* we are glad.

4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

5 They that sow in tears shall reap in ‖joy.

6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing ‖precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

‖ Or, *seed basket*.

PSALM CXXVII.

1 *The virtue of God's blessing.* 3 *Good children are his gift.*

A Song of degrees ‖ for Solomon.

‖ Or, *of Solomon*

B. XVIII. ch. 29, § 7. Similarly Livy, B. XXXIII. ch. 22; Quintus Curtius, B. IV. ch. i. 23.

2, 3. *The* LORD *hath done*, &c.] The words of Joel ii. 21 are repeated twice, to call attention to the fulfilment of ancient prophecy.

4. *Turn again*, &c.] A prayer: As the streams in **the dry land** [such is the first import of the word (*negeb*) rendered *the south* — see Josh. xv. 19; Judg. i. 15, Heb.—in our version] are restored in the rainy season, and fill the beds of ancient watercourses, and renew life and movement where silence and desolation were before, so, says the Psalmist, *turn our captivity*, or, *restore the residue*, to fill our streets and cities with inhabitants, and convert a wilderness into a peopled land. The point of comparison is the idea of restoration and renewal, as of waters in a desert land which have disappeared, so of peoples that are wanted and are far away. But others consider the point of comparison to be the idea of gratefulness and welcomeness, as of restored waters, so of returning peoples; and this image may be intended to be conveyed with the other. See Bp. Lowth's note in Meyrick's comment. upon the psalm, p. 243; also Ps. xlii. 1, note.

Many commentators, however (Ewald, Tholuck, Vaihinger, &c.), translate *vv.* 1 and 4 differently; and give a new idea to the image introduced in *v.* 4. Instead of the rendering, *Turn again our captivity*, &c., of *v.* 4, they translate "Relieve our misery," which the Heb. will bear, and explain the words as referring not so much to a complete restoration of the exiles, as to a relief from sore trial which undoubtedly (see Ezra and Nehem., passim) pressed upon the young colony in its first days. According to this explanation, the image in *v.* 4 is not that of restoration and renovation, or of gratefulness and welcomeness, but rather of suddenness and unexpectedness. "O Jehovah, relieve our misery suddenly, and, as it may well be said, miraculously; as streams in the wilderness, which one moment are dead and dry, and then suddenly become flowing rivers."

The first interpretation is to be preferred, as it seems almost indispensable to refer *v.* 1 to the return from captivity, and to translate as in our Version; and to give the same import to the almost identical words of *v.* 4.

5. *They that sow*, &c.] "That for which we pray will surely come to pass." See Ezra vi. 16, 22, Neh. xii. 43, for, perhaps, the quick realization of the hope. The sower goes forth in deep despondency, fearing a new disappointment: he returns with joy and rejoicing, and carries the fruit of his toil. To *sow in tears*, and *go forth in tears*, may seem exaggerated expressions; but see the description of a sower in the East in Burder's 'Oriental Customs,' Vol. I. p. 123, applicable no doubt in a special degree to husbandmen in the early days of the Return. Galat. vi. 7, 9, contains a New Testament commentary upon this text: see too Matt. v. 4.

6. *bearing precious seed*] The substantive rendered *precious* occurs only in this place, and in Job xxviii. 18: "*the price* of wisdom is above rubies." Its meaning in the latter place is doubtful. Schultens considers its import to be "weight." "The weight (*i.e.* in the balance) of wisdom is above rubies:" so here: "bearing a *weight* or *burden* his seed." Others conceive it to mean the bag or wallet in which the seed is carried: so the marg. The most common opinion is that it means a "handful of seed," or "cast of seed," which is supported by the LXX., Vulg., and Syr.

The rhythm of the original in *v.* 6 is noticeable. The slow sad motion of the sower going forth to his work of sorrowful anticipation, is contrasted with his quick glad return, bearing his sheaves. "He goes forth in sorrow bearing his seed, he returns with joy and rejoicing, bearing his (golden) grain."

PSALM CXXVII.

The general purport of the psalm is, Jehovah, the Protector and Guardian of house and city: the Source from whence flows all good: the Giver (out of mere bounty) of children; of male children born in a man's youth, and strong and vigorous, Gen. xlix. 3:—"of such arrows whosoever hath his quiver full is safe." The psalm may have been composed upon the occasion of the birth of some child of promise; a supposition which would account for the amplification of the idea of the blessing of

EXCEPT the LORD build the house, they labour in vain †that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

† Heb. that are *builders of it in it.*

2 *It is* vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep.

3 Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

4 As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth.

5 Happy *is* the man that †hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be

† Heb. *hath filled his quiver with them.*

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children at the end. Bishop Horsley supposes it to have been used for service in the temple when parents presented their firstborn according to the law (Exod. xxii. 29). The inscription, which may mean "by" or "relating to," or, as in our version, "for Solomon," is the principal reason for ascribing the psalm to him. The inscription is omitted in some MSS. of the LXX., and in other versions. It is rendered in the margin "of Solomon." A natural account of it, as interpreted by our translators, may be found in *v.* 2, which contains a manifest allusion to the king, his name, and the vision of the night which foretold his glory, 2 S. xii. 25; 1 K. iii. 5—13. The psalm contains a variety of expressions and sentiments similar to those which are allowed to have proceeded from the wise preacher, Prov. viii. 15, x. 12, 22, xvi. 9, &c.; but the argument drawn from its contents cannot be much relied on. Solomon would scarcely allude to himself by name, or repeat, in a psalm for public service, his written experience. The Syriac version ascribes the psalm to David, and conceives its subject to be David's purpose of building the temple in connection with the birth of Solomon. The place of the psalm in the collection, and its language in parts, suggest a date about or after the exile.

1. *Except the LORD*, &c.] The words rendered *build the house* may mean "arrange" or "raise up" "a family;" see Deut. xxv. 9; 1 S. ii. 35, &c. But the phrase is more expressive if its import be confined to its proper meaning: "Except Jehovah build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Except Jehovah's blessing rest upon it, the labour expended is wasted."

except the LORD keep the city, &c.] There is no direct allusion, in the first versicle, to Jehovah's House, *i.e.* the Temple, nor, here, to the city (exclusively) in which it is. Any house built without His blessing is built in vain! Unless Jehovah keep a city, the watch of the waker is in vain! A more exact rendering of the words in the first versicle is, "Except Jehovah build the house, they that build it labour in it in vain." Jonah iv. 10.

2. *It is vain for you*, &c.] The words *sit up late* should perhaps be rendered "sit down late," *i.e.* at meat. See 1 S. xx. 24. The custom of Israel, in early times, was to sit at meat. So the words are connected directly with what follows: *eat the bread of sorrows*.

the bread of sorrows] *i.e.* the scanty bread procured by hard toil, according to the primeval curse, Gen. iii. 17, 19. In Prov. iv. 17, the *bread of wickedness* is the bread obtained by wicked acts.

for so he giveth, &c.] *i.e.* "It is vain that ye rise up early," &c., "for he giveth to His beloved **in sleep** and **without labour, so,** *i.e.* **just as, even as,** to those who vainly harass themselves with labour and think not of Him."

his beloved] is one who trusts in Him, and whom He blesses in all his ways, and gives to him riches, honours, or wisdom, *as in sleep*, or *in sleep:* so He gave to Solomon himself, in sleep, His promise of all those things above mentioned: so parents provide for children who sleep the while, and wake to possessions for which they have not toiled.

If we translate as in the A.V. the meaning is, "Vain is your anxious labour, early rising, late resting, without Jehovah's blessing: for according to His pleasure He gives sleep to His beloved, *and all those things for which ye labour day and night in vain.*" But the ellipsis of the words in italics is too violent.

An over-anxious devotion to labour without confidence in God is censured. Earnest labour with eye turned to God Who blesses it, is everywhere approved in Scripture. See Proverbs, passim; Ps. cxxviii. 2, &c.

3. *Lo, children are an heritage*, &c.] The most signal of God's bounties to His beloved; children, the fruit of the womb, are His heritage, His gift, which comes from Him alone: gifts they are of mere goodness; scarcely understood as such, or prized enough, by those who enjoy these *rewards of God!*

4. *children of the youth*] *i. e.* children born to a man whilst he is young and able to rear them in tender years: and they too are able to protect him as age creeps on. A corresponding phrase occurs in Gen. xxxvii. 3, xliv. 20: Joseph and Benjamin were the sons *of Jacob's old age*. See also Isai. liv. 6, *a wife of youth.*

5. *Happy is the man*, &c.] "Happy the man

ashamed, but they [1] shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

[1] Or, *shall subdue*, as Ps. 18. 47, or, *destroy*.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The sundry blessings which follow them that fear God.

A Song of degrees.

BLESSED *is* every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt* thou *be*, and *it shall be* well with thee.

3 Thy wife *shall be* as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

5 The LORD shall bless thee out of

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that hath his quiver full," or "that hath filled his quiver full," of such arrows; that hath his bosom filled with these most precious gifts of God. He shall not be ashamed in the presence of his enemies: he shall defend his cause, with the aid of his sons, boldly "at the gate," Deut. xxi. 19; Job v. 4; Isai. xxix. 21; Josh. xx. 4. Unrighteous judges, malicious accusers, false witnesses, all give way before a father so protected. A quiver, full of arrows, in the hand of a warrior, furnishes an expressive image of an abundant supply of needful resource. The change of number in *v.* 5, "Happy is the man," &c., "they shall not be ashamed," is common (see Ps. cvii. 43, &c.).

PSALM CXXVIII.

Luther calls this psalm a fit Epithalamium or Marriage-Song for Christians; it is used as such in our church. The burden of it is, the blessings of the true worshipper of God, in his labour, *v.* 2, wife, *v.* 3, children, ib., children's children and country, *v.* 4. It is, as to contents, a continuation, apparently, of Ps. cxxvii.; the subject a continuation of the subject of that psalm; and the first verse, joining to, and continuing, the last verse of it.

The ascent of ideas, and reiteration of significant words, is conspicuous in this psalm. The Syr. Version ascribes it to Zerubbabel. The place of the psalm in the psalter, its language, contents, and manner, suggest that it was written after the earliest perils of return from exile had abated.

2. *For thou shalt eat*, &c.] The allusion is to Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 33; and perhaps Haggai i. 11, ii. 17; in which the disobedient are warned that their labour would be vain. The rendering should be, "Thou shalt eat, **verily**, the labour of thine hands," &c. The particle *For* does not occur in the beginning of the verse. See Ps. cxviii. 10, &c. *The labour of thine hands* is put for "the fruit of labour," as in Gen. xxxi. 42. Note, labour rewarded by God with fruit, is treated as the conspicuous gift of God! Note, too, the natural transition from the general sentiment in *v.* 1, to the address, in *v.* 2, to the fortunate labourer. Happiness, which is here and elsewhere promised to the true worshipper of God, is painted by its externals chiefly; the happiness in this life which is promised by Christ, Matt. v. 3, 4, to His followers, is pointedly internal.

3. *Thy wife shall be*, &c.] The wife is as the vine, the glory of the land, Num. xiii. 24; Deut. viii. 7, 8; a proverb, everywhere, for beauty, preciousness, and fertility (Gen. xlix. 11, 22; Judg. ix. 13; Ps. lxxx. 8, 9, 10): a plant, too, needing support, and clinging to it.

the sides of thine house] should rather be rendered, "the innermost chambers of thine house," and refer to "the wife," not "the vine." The words *the sides*, in the original, mean, in 1 S. xxiv. 3, "the inner recesses of a cave;" Isai. xiv. 15, "the depths of the pit;" Jonah i. 5, "the inner parts of a ship." The wife "in an inner chamber" rules her household, and does not wander abroad, as the wanton in Prov. vii. 12. The vine was not trained upon the "walls of houses," but in vineyards, upon terraces, on the "sides of hills," Isai. v. 1; Matt. xxi. 33: upon "supports," Ezek. xix. 11, 12 [see Note (1) at end of the psalm], or upon the ground. See the modern usage in Dean Stanley, 'S. and P.' pp. 162, 413, 414; Robinson's 'Bibl. Researches,' Vol. I. pp. 314, 316, Vol. II. p. 442, and 'Dict. of Bible,' p. 1685. As the wife is like the vine, the children are likened to olive-plants, and surround the table on which is abundant food. The olive, another glory of the land, is a proverb, everywhere, for productiveness, luxuriance, and fatness: Judg. ix. 9; Jer. xi. 16; Hosea xiv. 6. The similitude in the text is taken from a multitude of young olive-shoots clustering round the parent-tree, as described in Thomson's 'Land and Book,' p. 57. See the Note (2) below. The Prayer-Book Version by substituting "branches" for "plants" makes the idea of the original less easy to see.

5. *The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion*] The seat from whence He showers down blessings always upon His chosen: Pss. iii. 4, xiv. 7, xx. 2, cxxxiv. 3.

Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, *and* peace upon Israel.

and thou shalt see] Lit. "and see," *i.e.* with satisfaction; the imperative for the future, which is painted as in sight. The blessing which follows a good man, under the old dispensation conspicuously, falls also upon his country; it is blessed all the days of his long (*v.* 6) life. Length of days, a well-known indication under that old covenant, of God's favour, Exod. xx. 12, &c. There is a stop after "children:"—the connecting particle "and" is not in the original.

6. *peace upon Israel*] The blessing at the end of the song, as in Ps. cxxv., &c.

NOTES on PSALM CXXVIII. 3.

(1) The conversation in John xv. 1, 2, 3, is supposed by some to have been suggested by the vine creeping over the walls of the house in which the Saviour was: but probably it occurred after He left the chamber in which the supper was eaten, on Olivet, in the night-air. The vine may have been seen upon the moon-lit sides of Olivet, or creeping round the court of the house in which they were assembled. See John xiv. 31, "Arise, let us go hence." See Dean Stanley's 'S. and P.' p. 414, 1st ed.

(2) 1 S. xvi. 11, "And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: *for we will not sit down* (lit. *surround*, *i.e.* the table) till he come."

PSALM CXXIX.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for saving Israel in their great afflictions.* 5 *The haters of the church are cursed.*

A Song of degrees.

1 MANY a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: (Or, *Much.*)

2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.

3 The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

4 The LORD *is* righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

5 Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

PSALM CXXIX.

The language and contents of this psalm, and the group of psalms with which it is connected, favour the common opinion that it is a composition of the early days after return from exile. The repetition of phrases, constituting a sort of burden, is noticeable in *vv.* 1, 2, and 8. The commencement calls to mind Ps. cxxiv. 1; the number of verses is the same; and not improbably the same author wrote both psalms.

The Psalmist, *vv.* 1—4, refers with thankfulness to the *many times* in days past in which God had delivered His people from destruction; and, *vv.* 5—8, anticipates with confident hope the shame and confusion of His enemies in time to come.

1. *Many a time*, &c.] Or, "Much," *i.e.* "grievously," as in the margin.

my youth] The thraldom in Egypt is often represented as the youth of Israel. See Isai. xlvii. 12, 15; Jer. ii. 2, iii. 25, &c.; Hos. ii. 15, xi. 1, &c. The young nation grew there, despite its taskmasters, till it threw off the yoke, and dwelt apart.

3. *The plowers*] An image precisely similar to this does not occur in Scripture: one somewhat similar occurs Isai. li. 23. The lashes inflicted upon the back of the writhing slave by a cruel master are compared to the long furrows pierced in the passive earth by the share of the plougher. See Mic. iii. 12. The next verse introduces a new image, naturally suggested by the last: the righteous God has cut asunder the cords (Heb. "cord") of the wicked, so that the yoked and wearied steer is released from its toil (cf. Ps. ii. 3).

5. *Let them all*, &c.] This verse and the next contain a prophecy, rather than a wish or prayer. All the enemies of Zion **will be put to shame**, and **driven back**, *i.e.* with shame and confusion, from "their enterprise" against Zion. They shall be *as grass upon the housetops*, that is not gathered nor garnered; that stirs up no cry, in mower or in passer-by, of joy and thankfulness; but perishes where it grew, unblessed and blasted: Isai. xxxvii. 27; 2 K. xix. 26.

Zion is the seat of Jehovah, out of which

6 Let them be as the grass *upon* the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

8 Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the LORD *be* upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD.

PSALM CXXX.

1 The psalmist professeth his hope in prayer, 5 and his patience in hope. 7 He exhorteth Israel to hope in God.

A Song of degrees.

OUT of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.

2 Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

He sends always blessings upon His chosen, Ps. cxxviii. 5. The grass which sprang up upon the flat roofs of the houses in Palestine, having no depth of earth, nor moisture, quickly withered away. The words *afore it groweth up* are ambiguous. Some interpret, "which withers before any one draw a sword and cut it down;" the ambiguous word being used in Judg. viii. 20, and elsewhere, in the sense of "drawing a sword out of the scabbard:" others, "which withers before any one pluck it up," and refer to Ruth iv. 7, 8, where the word in question is used in the sense of "drawing off," or "plucking off," a shoe. This interpretation is favoured by the LXX., Theod., and the P. B. V. Others, after the Chaldee paraphrase, "which withers before it put forth a sprout." This interpretation is favoured by the LXX. (according to a reading mentioned by Theodoret), agrees with the Authorized Version, and gives a sense suited to the context. The renderings, "which withereth before it is cut down," or "any one cut it down," or "before it is plucked up," or "any one pluck it up," seem too elliptical and harsh, and introduce an image which is pointless; while that of grass withering before it comes to maturity and produces flower or fruit is natural and apt.

Reuss remarks that *vv.* 7, 8 add nothing to the sense. Yet few verses of Scripture are more suggestive. In contrast to the withering and blasted grass upon the housetops, they call up to our imagination a scene of rural peace and prosperous labour like that of Ruth ii. 3: a scene too, Ewald remarks, often suggested in this group of psalms, and in some sort characteristic of it. The details of such a scene are dwelt upon in *vv.* 7, 8, to exhibit conspicuously the contrast between the enemies of Israel and of God (whose fate is to perish suddenly and without help), and His friends, who prosper in all their ways, and are cared for as treasured fruits, and blessed again and again, and in every way, by passers-by and lookers on, as the beloved of God. In Ruth ii. 4 Boaz says to the reapers, *The Lord be with you*, and the reapers answer, *The Lord bless thee*, but in these verses the passers-by bless twice in varied phrase.

PSALM CXXX.

This psalm is a manifest example of a "Psalm of Steps or Ascents:" see p. 455. From the depths of woe the Psalmist ascends, step after step, to absolute trust in God, and security of redemption. The iteration of phrases, *vv.* 5, 6, is also characteristic of this psalm; which in many respects reminds us of Ps. lxxxvi.

It may have been used at the general confession for national transgression described in Ezra ix. 5, 10: but its passionate earnestness and concentration of sorrow rather suggest individual sin, and (*v.* 1) present suffering, as its first occasion: on which supposition the sufferer, in *v.* 7, reads the lesson of his own experience to his beloved people.

The Psalmist says nothing of the severity of his chastisement, nor hints that it is undeserved; nay, he assumes that it is deserved; and still sharper punishment, if God should be extreme in marking what is amiss.

The words, *let thine ears be attentive*, in *v.* 2, occur in 2 Chro. vi. 40, vii. 15; and the word rendered "forgiveness," *v.* 4, only in Dan. ix. 9 and Neh. ix. 17. These expressions point to a late date; earlier, however, than Chronicles.

Luther, in sharp pain of body and peril of life, consoled his spirit by reciting again and again this sixth penitential psalm, which he has freely imitated in his well-known hymn, "Aus tiefer Noth," &c. The Christian doctrine of the forgiveness, through mere mercy, of sin, and of redemption through Christ's merits, lies so near the surface of this psalm that, we may say, the most careless may see it. The passionate earnestness of the psalm is enhanced by the repetition eight times in it of the Divine Name.

1. *Out of the depths*] That is, of misery and sorrow, the fruit of sin. The fuller expression of *deep waters* occurs Ps. lxix. 2, 14; Ezek. xxvii. 34; see too Pss. xlii. 7, lxxxviii. 7.

2. *Lord*] Heb. Adonai, "Sovereign Lord."

3 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

4 But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

5 I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

6 My soul *waiteth* for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: [1] *I say, more than* they that watch for the morning.

[1] Or, *which watch unto the morning.*

7 Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption.

8 And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

PSALM CXXXI.

1 *David, professing his humility,* 3 *exhorteth Israel to hope in God.*

A Song of degrees of David.

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3. *mark iniquities*] That is, "notice curiously and recollect iniquities." See Job x. 14, xiv. 16, 17; Ps. xc. 8.

who shall stand?] "Who shall stand, and endure Thy Presence?" The full expression occurs Ps. lxxvi. 7. The image seems, in the first instance, drawn from a flight in battle before a too powerful foe. Comp. Amos ii. 15; Nahum i. 6; Mal. iii. 2.

4. *But there is forgiveness with thee,* &c.] Rather, "For with Thee is forgiveness," &c. A sentence is understood: "Away with such dark anticipation: for Thy property is mercy."

that thou mayest be feared] That is, with a holy and reverent fear which attracts and persuades: far different from a haughty confidence, which has never known anxiety: different too from abject terror, akin to alienation and aversion, which casts aside hope, and inclines to despair, rebellion, and hatred. See Jer. xxxiii. 9; Rom. ii. 4.

5. *his word*] That is, "word of promise." See Pss. cxix. 74, 81, 82: also Job xxxii. 11. "There are some," says Luther, "who instead of waiting for God, His time, His way, His help, take upon themselves to decide for Him, how, when, and in what degree, He shall aid. This is not to wait for Him; it is to make God wait upon them, and aid them as they define the way."

in his word do I hope, &c.] Or, "For His word do I look earnestly." Aq. ἐκαραδόκησα.

6. *My soul waiteth,* &c.] The literal rendering is, **My soul to Jehovah**; that is, "My soul is wholly Jehovah's." See Pss. cxxiii. 2, cxliii. 6. "I look to Him alone; with confidence the same, but desire far deeper, than that with which *watchers wait for the morning;* wait for the cheerful morning after the dark hours of night." The priests and Levites watching in the temple (Ps. cxxxiv. 1), and waiting for the morning, may be meant: so the Talmud and Chaldee interpreter. But rather any watchers are meant (Ps. cxxvii. 1) who wait for the morning-light after sleepless watchings: see Deut. xxviii. 67. The repetition of significant words (as noted above) is characteristic of this psalm, and also expresses the length and weariness of watching. See Isai. xxi. 11.

7. *Let Israel hope,* &c.] The P. B. V. is more correct, "O Israel, trust in the Lord," &c. The cry of distress is changed into a declaration of trust, "Jehovah is merciful: therefore His power to save is great as His will; and He will save from sin and death." The original word does not mean simply "mercy," but "the mercy;" that is, "the mercy to Him peculiar." Kay quotes the words of the Communion-Service, "Thy property is always to have mercy:" so in *v.* 4, not simply "forgiveness," but "the forgiveness for which Thou art known and feared" is expressed.

8. *he shall redeem,* &c.] *he* emphatic.

PSALM CXXXI.

The inscription assigns the psalm to David; and the spirit, manner and contents of its earlier verses confirm the title. The incident mentioned in 2 S. vi. 22 is supposed by some to have given occasion to the psalm: but other incidents in the life of the king are fully as apposite.

Greatness of soul and a true humility characterized David in obscurity and upon the throne. He sought not the kingdom till God ordained him to it. He bore the persecutions of Saul with patience, and avenged his death and that of Ishbosheth. He allowed Shimei to curse. A psalm upon humility and practical trust in God, and a faithful waiting upon Him, would come with special force from David. It may be said of this psalm, as of almost every other, that its conciseness, rapidity and earnestness, assure us that it was written upon some occasion that naturally called it forth. Hupfeld, Ewald, De Wette, Delitzsch, and many others, consider it of the date of the exile, and attributed to David on account of its resemblance to Pss. xviii., ci. The omission of the inscription in the Septuagint Version seems the principal argument for doubting the authorship. The place of the psalm in the psalter

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I †exercise myself in great matters, or in things too †high for me.

2 Surely I have behaved and quieted †myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

3 Let Israel hope in the LORD †from henceforth and for ever.

† Heb. *from now.*

PSALM CXXXII.

1 *David in his prayer commendeth unto God the religious care he had for the ark.* 8 *His prayer at the removing of the ark,* 11 *with a repetition of God's promises.*

A Song of degrees.

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may be simply owing to its use in the services of the latter temple.

The reference to the days of the Maccabees (1 Macc. xiv.) by Hitzig is supported by no argument of much weight.

1. *LORD, my heart,* &c.] The seat of pride is the heart: it is exhibited in look, or eye (a similar expression Pss. xviii. 27, ci. 5), or in action. The lofty matters in which the Psalmist does not love, and has not loved, to *exercise* himself ("to walk," marg.), that is, *to meditate incessantly* (Ps. i. 2), are, perhaps, the ways of God, which are wonderful (Ps. cxxxix. 6; Jer. xxxiii. 3), and too high for him; the scheme of redemption; the prosperity of the wicked, and similar mysteries. The word rendered *high* would seem to mean "hard" or "wonderful." Gen. xviii. 14; Deut. xxx. 11; Job xlii. 3.

2. *Surely I have behaved...myself,* &c.] Lit. "If I have not behaved and quieted my spirit," &c. The full expression may be gathered from Ruth i. 17 (orig.), "If I have not done so and so, may the Lord do so and so," &c. See also Isai. v. 9 (orig.); Job xvii. 2 (orig.). The import is, as in our Version, "Surely, instead of exercising myself in too high matters, I have behaved and quieted myself," &c. The rendering *behaved* seems put for "restrained" or "disciplined:" the original word is metaphorical, and suggests the image of a "ploughman levelling the furrows," see Isai. xxviii. 25, or, it may be, of the waves of the sea *levelling* after a storm. The image next introduced, *quieted* (that is, "stilled," or "calmed"), is that of silence and peace, as of the sea, after tumult, coupled with an idea of "waiting;" see Ps. lxii. 1; Lam. iii. 26. The following words introduce a still new image—*as a child that is weaned of his mother*, or, rather, "as a child that is weaned by, near, or upon, its mother." The spirit of the Psalmist is still, as the weaned child is tranquil on its mother's breast: irregular desires, ambitious longings, appetite for knowledge too high for him, have all given place to "rest in God," the hope of the singer. The next versicle, *my soul is even as a weaned child*, does not repeat the image above-mentioned. Rather the soul of the Psalmist is itself styled now "the weaned child;" "even so, stilled and quieted, is the weaned child within me, or upon me, my soul."

3. *Let Israel,* &c.] Rather, "O Israel, hope," &c. "The Psalmist," says Ewald, "describes a contentment, resignation, and devotion to the divine will, the most absolute, after lengthened struggles and temptations. The storm of passion has been allayed, all proud longings and vain expectations have been curbed. As a child at rest the poet *waits* the future which is before him, with joyous confidence in its revelations, and faithful encouragement to his people to wait with him. Nothing can be more beautiful than the sketch in the psalm of a *new birth* to a *new life:* nothing more striking than *its guarantee* of *a better future* which the anticipated new birth holds out: nothing more suggestive of the noblest promise than the renunciation of all selfish personal aims, and resolution of them into a prayer for the nation's weal." The short lovely song is as a bud in spring which waits for the light to display its beauty and spread abroad its sweetness The light of Christianity and the spirit of Christianity has now shone upon it, warmed it, and discovered its closely packed excellencies, and hidden significances, which David who sang, and Israel who listened, may not have apprehended.

PSALM CXXXII.

A prayer to Jehovah for the continuance of David's line. *Vv.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 describe David's labour and anxiety in making preparation for building "a house for Jehovah:" *v.* 6 introduces, as it would seem, *the people* singing some of the localities (see below) in which the Ark of God was heard of or seen in ancient days and before its settlement on Mount Zion, and men's uncertainties about it: *v.* 7 expresses the joy and satisfaction of all men at the opportunity afforded of praising Jehovah in His new abode: *v.* 8 is the address to Him, and prayer, that He would take up His rest, and abide with His people: *vv.* 9, 10, contain special prayers for happiness and peace to priests and people, through Jehovah abiding close to them; followed, in *vv.* 11, 12, 13, by a reference, in connection with such prayers, to the promise made to David and his seed, in case of obedience: in *vv.* 14—18, Jehovah replies to all the above entreaties and references; proclaims His love for Zion, and determination

LORD, remember David, *and* all his afflictions:

2 How he sware unto the LORD, *and* vowed unto the mighty *God* of Jacob;

3 Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;

4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes, *or* slumber to mine eyelids,

5 Until I find out a place for the LORD, †an habitation for the mighty *God* of Jacob.

† Heb. *habitations.*

6 Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.

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to rest in it for ever; to bless it and its inhabitants, always, with choicest blessings; and to raise up a horn to His anointed, for the confusion of His enemies, and His own perpetual renown.

The characteristics of "Psalms of Degrees" are not seen in this psalm: its length, too, discriminates it from the rest of the group in which it is; and the ordinary parallelism of Hebrew poetry is noticeable in it, *vv.* 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. In *vv.* 2, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, a repetition of significant phrases reminds of Gesenius' view, p. 455.

There is a manifest resemblance in style, diction and matter between the ps. and Ps. lxxii.

It is most difficult to assign any time at which it was probably written. A considerable portion, *vv.* 1—8, 13, 14, of it suits the great occasion of the settlement of the ark on Mount Zion; but the absence of a title ascribing the psalm to David, the mention of him in *vv.* 10, 17, and the occurrence of the psalm in a collection of later psalms, are against the supposition that he was the author. So too the absence of a title ascribing the psalm to Solomon, and its place in the book of Psalms, are against the opinion (of Tholuck, De Wette, and others) that Solomon was the author. A favourite notion is that it was written after the exile: and that the *anointed* mentioned in *vv.* 10, 17, is Zerubbabel, or Simon the Maccabee, or other late king or priest. The interest, spirit, and significance of the psalm are greatly sacrificed by this supposition. The first verses describing David's labour and care in reference to Jehovah's first resting-place become in comparison pointless: the details respecting the ark (*vv.* 6—8), which did not survive the captivity, become uninteresting. The building of the first temple is not (probably) mentioned; and the allusions in *vv.* 11, 12, 15, 18, to the line of David, and Jehovah's promised blessings, uttered in a free, joyous, spirit, scarcely suit the nation's decline.

Possibly the psalm may be composed, as Ps. lxviii., of various ancient fragments of David and others, with additions of later date. The additions, now, it may be impossible to discriminate from the older portions. The great obscurity of the psalm and its abruptness favour this supposition: see *vv.* 1, 6, 8, &c. The early part may have been written for the great event of David's life: see Dean Stanley, 'Jewish Church,' Vol. II. p. 85: *vv.* 13, 14 can scarcely have been written for any other occasion. Solomon may have used the psalm upon a still greater occasion: in fact, *vv.* 8, 9, with slight change, occur 2 Chro. vi. 41, 42, in Solomon's prayer. The inestimable fragments may have been used in the temple service without alteration at later opportunities, and words added, which give the whole a character suited to a later age.

The ark was some time at Mizpeh, Judg. xx. 1; some time at Shiloh, 1 S. iv. 3; for twenty years at Kirjath-jearim, 1 S. vii. 2; three months in the house of Obed-edom, 2 S. vi. 11.

The words of the psalm do not decide absolutely the question whether the vow, *v.* 2, refers to the building of the temple, or to the building of a permanent, instead of a temporary, abode for the ark: see Ps. lxxviii. 67, &c. In the days of Saul men troubled not themselves about it; 1 Chro. xiii. 3.

1, 2. *LORD, remember David,* &c.] Rather, **Remember, O Lord, to David,** &c. "To David," *i.e.* in order to a divine recompense. We read, in 1 Chro. xxii. 14, of David's *trouble*, *i.e.* painful anxiety and affliction (Isai. liii. 4; Ps. cxix. 71), in making preparation for building a permanent House for Jehovah. The vow need not be interpreted literally, nor its terms, to which the LXX. add, pressed: it describes the king's fixed determination to execute the work without stint of labour and price. According to the word of Nathan, 2 S. vii. 2, 3, &c., Jehovah Himself interfered to delay the execution.

3. *Surely*] In the original the same form of expression as in the preceding psalm, *v.* 2.

the tabernacle of my house] Or, "the tabernacle or tent which is my house," a poetical periphrasis for "my house."

into my bed] Or, more precisely, "into the bed (which is) my couch," *i.e.* of rest. See a similar expression, Gen. xlix. 4.

5. *the mighty God of Jacob*] Or, "the mighty (One) of Jacob." See the original phrase, Gen. xlix. 24; also Isai. i. 24, xlix. 26, &c.

6. *Lo, we heard of it,* &c.] Lit. "We

7 We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool.

8 [a] Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength.

9 Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.

10 For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.

11 The LORD hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; [b] Of the fruit of [t] thy body will I set upon thy throne.

12 If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

13 For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

14 This *is* my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

15 I will [1] abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.

16 I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

17 [c] There will I make the horn of

mb. ... on. 6. ... am. 7. ... in. 8. ... ron. 6. ... c 1. 69. ... 2. 30. ... illy.

[1] Or, *surely*

[c] Luke 1. 69.

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heard of it, *i.e.* the ark (implied, but not expressed, in *v.* 5), in Ephratah; we found it in the fields of the forest." The words, it may be, of the people: Ephratah, or Ephrath, is a well-known title of Bethlehem (Gen. xxxv. 19; Ruth iv. 11; Mic. v. 2); but we have no authority for saying that the ark was at Bethlehem. Some imagine the words of *vv.* 6, 7 to be a continuation of the words of David which precede: "Lo! we heard of it, *i.e.* the ark, in our tender infancy at Ephratah or Bethlehem, and found it in the fields of the wood, *i.e.* at Kirjath-jearim." But the words, *we heard of it at Ephratah*, can scarcely mean anything but "we heard of it (as being) at Ephratah." It must be confessed that no interpretation of the place is satisfactory: the allusion may be to an incident not recorded.

7. *his tabernacles*] Lit. "His habitations," as in the marg., *i.e.* upon Mount Zion; see *v.* 5.

his footstool] *i.e.* the ark dwelling within His tabernacle. See Ps. xcix. 5; 1 Chro. xxviii. 2. Jehovah dwells (Ps. lxxx. 1) above or upon the cherubim: the ark is under His feet.

8. *Arise, O LORD*, &c.] A similar cry was raised in the wilderness when the ark was moved each morning from its rest at night, Num. x. 35, 36; Ps. lxviii. 1. The Ark of God is only mentioned here by name in the psalms. See 2 Chro. vi. 41.

9. *Let thy priests*, &c.] "Let Thy priests be clad in fitting attire (see Lev. vi. 10), figuring the inner, still more glorious, attire, which they should wear, of holiness and obedience to Him Whom they serve;" Job xxix. 14; Isai. lxi. 10; Rev. xix. 8. *And let Thy saints*, *i.e.* Thy chosen people generally, "shout for joy at the majestic prospect before all."

10. *For thy servant David's sake*, &c.] A disappointed suppliant turns away his face, and retires disconsolate. So "to turn away the face" is "to reject the prayer" of a petitioner. See 1 K. ii. 16, 17, 20 (Heb.); 2 K. xviii. 24. The anointed is, undoubtedly, the suppliant, theocratic king, who speaks in the psalm. The prayer is, that God would abide always with His people, and grant the blessings which follow in His train, *vv.* 9, 10, &c.

11. *The LORD hath sworn*, &c.] In the prayer at the dedication of the temple, 1 K. viii. 25 (see the promise 2 S. vii. 12—16), Jehovah is similarly reminded of His promise to David's line. The more accurate rendering of the verse would be, "The Lord hath sworn to David: it is truth: He will not swerve," &c. The intense earnestness and solemnity of the words suggest the opinion that they were written whilst the line of David was upon the throne: and not at a later time when hope was faint or extinct. See Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4.

13. *For the LORD*, &c.] Tholuck supposes these words to refer to the settlement of the ark by Solomon in its final resting-place; and suggests that Zion may mean the hill of Zion including Mount Moriah, upon which the temple was built. But rather (Moll, &c.), Zion seems used here (as often in the later pss.) for the city of Jerusalem; as the verses following describe the blessings to descend upon its king and people through the choice of it by Jehovah as His rest for ever. The abundance, *v.* 15, overflows to the poor: the salvation, *i.e.* health, prosperity, and divine endowments, of the priests, overflows in happiness to the whole people. In *v.* 9, the *prayer* is, that "the priests be clothed with righteousness." In the word (*vv.* 14—16) of Jehovah in reply, the blessing is *promised* but in altered phrase.

17. *There will I make*, &c.] Or, "There will I make a horn to branch forth to, or for, David." A horn, the symbol of dominion (Ps. cxii. 9; Jer. xlviii. 25; Mic. iv. 13;

David to bud: I have ordained a ‖lamp for mine anointed.

‖ Or, *candle.*

18 His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

PSALM CXXXIII.

The benefit of the communion of saints.

A Song of degrees of David.

BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell † together in unity!

† Heb. *even together.*

2 *It is* like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

3 As the dew of Hermon, *and as the*

Ezek. xxix. 21, &c.). The image is taken from the notion of a powerful animal with one horn; or from the custom in eastern countries of wearing a horn upon the ornaments of the head. See Burder's 'Oriental Customs,' Vol. I. pp. 118, 120, also note, Ps. xcii. 10. The image in Deut. xxxiii. 17, and 1 K. xxii. 11, is different: it is borrowed from bulls or buffaloes that strike or push with their horns. The image again in Job xvi. 15 is different: *horn* is there used simply for "head." David, in this place, is put for *his line.*

A lamp shining and giving light to a household is a common symbol of prosperity and glory (2 S. xxi. 17; 1 K. xi. 36, xv. 4; Ps. xviii. 28). Similar images occur in Ezek. xxix. 21; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15; Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12. It cannot be doubted that Messiah, the Branch of Jehovah and of Righteousness, the Horn of Salvation, the Lamp of Jehovah, on Whose Head a crown perpetual flourishes, is pointed at, with more or less distinctness, in all the passages just quoted; and so the Jews themselves explain. One of their daily prayers is, "Soon may the Branch, the Root of David, spring up, and His Horn be excellent," &c.

PSALM CXXXIII.

Some doubt is thrown upon the authority of the inscription, which ascribes this psalm to David, by its omission in the LXX., Chaldee, and other versions, and in some Hebrew MSS. The Alexandrian copy of the LXX., however, retains it.

The inscription may mean, not that the psalm was written by David, but that it breathes his spirit: or, that it has reference to him that loved Jonathan as a brother, and lamented him when dead with a brother's sorrow.

The subject is brotherly love. Is the love of brethren living in one family as brethren, intended, or the brotherly love, as it may be called, of citizens and countrymen living together in one city compact in unity? It is best to interpret the simple, graphic, original psalm according to the obvious meaning of its words, and not to mix up with the interpretation of it inferences and applications. The psalm may have been suggested to the Psalmist by the sight or the tale of some family living as described in it, *together, united in affection, as by blood.*

In *vv.* 2, 3 a repetition of significant words, "that *ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron,* and *ran down* (orig.) to the skirts of his clothing," &c., reminds us of the view of Gesenius, p. 455, touching these Psalms of Degrees.

1. *Behold, how good,* &c.] Heb. "that brethren should dwell also together." See marg.

2. *It is like the precious ointment,* &c.] Like the "precious oil that is poured upon the head of Aaron" (Exod. xxx. 23—33; Lev. xxi. 10), flowing over his beard and clothing, consecrating the man and his vestments, see Lev. viii. 12, 30, uniting them together as one body, 1 Cor. xii. 14, and filling all space around with a delightful fragrance. Concord of brethren, united in one household and loving as brethren, is similarly excellent and precious; diffusing all around a delightful satisfaction; and suggesting, to those who witness it, a vision of peace and love, and of sympathy and brotherhood ever extending.

The exact rendering of the Hebrew is, "As the precious oil (poured) upon the head, descending upon the beard — upon Aaron's beard—that descends (or is seen descending) also to the edge of his clothing." The edge of his clothing is the upper edge or border terminating the robe, and girdling the neck; or perhaps the lower edge or rim, terminating the robe below the waist. The word employed, which means literally "mouth," suits best the first of these interpretations. See Exod. xxviii. 32; Job xxx. 18.

3. *As the dew of Hermon,* &c.] Heb. "As the dew of Hermon that falls down upon the hills of Zion," &c. Concord again is like the dew of Hermon, which falls, gently, copiously, imperceptibly, *watering* the land of promise. See Prov. xix. 12; Mic. v. 7. The dew of Hermon may be mentioned as a well-known copious dew: it seems an exaggeration that it is described as falling upon "the hills of Zion:" but the

dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

PSALM CXXXIV.

An exhortation to bless God.

A Song of degrees.

BEHOLD, bless ye the LORD, all *ye* servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

2 Lift up your hands [1]*in* the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

3 The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

[1] Or, in *holiness.*

PSALM CXXXV.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his mercy,* 5 *for his power,* 8 *for his judgments.* 15 *The vanity of idols.* 19 *An exhortation to bless God.*

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summit of Hermon can be seen, towering aloft and covered with snow, to the borders of the Dead Sea; and the storm bursting upon the summit of Hermon, see Ps. xxix., is felt all through the land to the distant wilderness. Some interpret "*the mountains of Zion,*" as "mount *Sion which is Hermon,*" Deut. iv. 48; but the spelling of the two words is different; the point of the illustration is lost if the holy hill of Zion is not introduced; and the meaning is insipid if the dew of Hermon simply falls upon the hills of Hermon. It falls upon Hermon first, upon the valleys below, and upon every hill and every valley through the whole of Palestine; and so is an apt image of "brotherly love," which, seen in a narrow circle, expands from it, as waves from a centre, and leavens a whole community and an entire nation.

The A. V., *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion*, seems to destroy the correspondence of the two images of the oil and dew; the oil which descends upon the beard and then upon the garments of the priest, and the dew which descends upon the distant hills of Zion, and connects them in some sort with the mountains from which the dew proceeds. *The mountains of Zion* is an unusual expression. See Dean Stanley's 'Sin. and Pal.' p. 396, note.

for there, &c.] That is, in Zion, without a mention of which this song of brotherly love would be incomplete.

PSALM CXXXIV.

The psalm consists of two parts: *vv.* 1, 2, make the first part, and *v.* 3, the second. In the first part, the Psalmist, in the name of the community of Israel, incites *the servants* of Jehovah, *i.e.* the Priests and Levites, ere they enter upon the nightly offices of the sanctuary, to praise and bless Jehovah effectively. "He urges them," says Calvin, "not to stand idle in their ministry, nor spend the night in arranging the ceremonial of the services, lighting the lamps, and preparing the sacrifices, a work comparatively naught and profitless, but to pray also in spirit, and praise God from the heart." In part 2, the choir of ministers so addressed promises Jehovah's blessing, according to their effectual prayer, to the whole people, and to each individual of it. Compare Ps. cxxxv. 1, 2.

1. *by night stand*, &c.] *Stand, i.e.* minister (Deut. x. 8, xviii. 7; Prov. xxii. 29, &c.) in the temple. The offices were performed, probably, by night as well as day. See Lev. viii. 35; 1 S. iii. 3; 1 Chro. ix. 33; see too Luke ii. 37. The words added here in the P. B. V., "even in the courts of the house of our God," are from the LXX.

2. *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary*] See Pss. v. 7, xxviii. 2, xcix. 5, cxxxviii. 2. Pray to Jehovah, with faces turned, and hands lifted, **towards** *the sanctuary*.

3. *The LORD that made*, &c.] "Jehovah Who made heaven and earth (Pss. cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8) **shall send** from Zion, in which He abides (Ps. cxxviii. 5), the choicest blessings upon His people." "The Lord bless thee," or "shall bless thee," is the ordinary form of priestly blessing (see Num. vi. 24), addressed to each individual of a community or congregation.

Some expositors (Hupfeld, &c.) reject the notion of two speakers, *vv.* 1, 2, and 3, and conceive the Psalmist alone to speak; in *vv.* 1, 2, urging the ministers of the temple to alacrity in their worship; and, in *v.* 3, promising Jehovah's blessing as attendant upon it. On this supposition it is hard to explain the change of expression (orig.) in *vv.* 1, 2, and 3: but it must needs be a matter of conjecture who the speakers are.

The *burden* of this short song, which is *blessing thrice repeated*, reminds us finally of Gesenius's doctrine touching the Psalms of Degrees, p. 455.

PSALM CXXXV.

A Hallelujah Psalm (*v.* 1), for Temple Service.. There is a correspondence, between this psalm and the last, as between a painting and its rough sketch. It invites the Priests and Levites who minister in the House of Jehovah to sing His praises and wonderful

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise *him*, O ye servants of the LORD.

2 Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God,

3 Praise the LORD; for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant.

4 For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.

5 For I know that the LORD *is* great, and *that* our Lord *is* above all gods.

6 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

7 [a] He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.

8 [b] Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, [†] both of man and beast.

9 *Who* sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

10 [c] Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;

11 Sihon king of the Amorites, and

[a] Jer. 10. 13.
[b] Exod. 12. 29.
[†] Heb. *from man unto beast*
[c] Numb. 21. 24, 25. 26, 34, 35.

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works in nature (*vv.* 6, 7), and in deliverances of His people (*vv.* 8, 9, 10). With His wondrous doings and His power which endures for ever (*vv.* 13, 14), it contrasts the might of idols which see not, hear not, do not, are not (*vv.* 15, 16).

Delitzsch styles it a mosaic, made up for the most part of pieces selected from other psalms, and from the prophetical writings. Pss. xcvii. and xcviii. are specimens, among the psalms, of similar compilations. Jeremiah's prophecies contain, similarly, many words of ancient prophecy inserted into the body of his instructions. The passages referred to in this psalm are for the most part known, and reference is made to them as they occur.

The date and author cannot be ascertained: but the language in many parts and its character, as above described, seem to point to a late date.

1. *ye servants*, &c.] As in Ps. cxxxiv. 1 these words probably indicate the Priests and Levites. The Levites ministered before God in His house (Deut. x. 8; 1 Chro. xxiii. 3), and sang praises to Him continually. The Priests ministered day and (probably) night, offering sacrifices, repeating prayers, and joining in songs of praise. The mention of *courts* suggests to some the notion that the whole people are addressed. But the expression seems only equivalent to "house of Jehovah;" Pss. lxxxiv. 3, xcii. 13, cxvi. 19, &c.

3. *for it is pleasant*] to sing praises to His name, as in Ps. cxlvii. 1; Prov. xxii. 18: see also Ps. cxxxiii. 1: or, rather, "for it (*i.e.* His name) is pleasant or lovely;" see Ps. liv. 6.

4. *For the LORD*, &c.] The words of Deut. vii. 6 are recited.

5. *For I know*, &c.] Emphatic: I know from experience; recent and decisive it may be: see Exod. iii. 19; 1 S. xvii. 28.

gods] Elohim; gods, so called, of the heathen.

6. *Whatsoever*, &c.] Ps. cxv. 3. "The specification of Jehovah's doings according to His pleasure, in heaven, earth, the sea, and all deep places," says Calvin, "puts before us in a graphic manner His particular care always and everywhere." In Ex. xx. 4, heaven, earth, and water under the earth, are used to describe all creation.

7. *He causeth*, &c.] Jer. x. 13, li. 16. The clouds rising up in the far horizon fraught with abundance of rain (1 K. xviii. 44) are intended.

he maketh lightnings for the rain] Or, to bring forth rain (LXX. ἀστραπὰς εἰς ὑετὸν ἐποίησεν), when nature is parched up through a long drought. Some render "lightnings with rain" (P. B. V.), which is (in comparison) pointless. Lightning is described as in itself God's wondrous work: beneficent, too, in clearing the air; and issuing (though fire and water seem of all things most opposed) miraculously in rain: see Ps. xxix. 10; Zech. x. 1. The expression, *ends of the earth*, does not strictly mean the horizon; but, the earth being a vast plain of which the ends are out of the reach of man's sight, God there stores His clouds (in the A. V. *vapours*), as He stores His winds in secret hollow treasure-houses: out of these distant, secret, stores He summons clouds and winds at His pleasure: see Job xxxviii. 22; Ps. xxxiii. 7. A somewhat similar figure Virg. 'Æn.' I. 25.

With *vv.* 8—12 compare cxxxvi. 10—22.

9. *into the midst of thee*, &c.] Ps. cxvi. 19. *Pharaoh and his servants*, *i.e.* his ministers and courtiers; Exod. v. 21, vii. 10.

10. *Who smote*, &c.] Deut. iv. 38, vii. 2, ix. 1, &c. Sihon, Deut. ii. 30; Num. xxi. 21—23. Sihon and Og are mentioned as the

Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan:

12 [d]And gave their land *for* an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.

13 Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever; *and* thy memorial, O LORD, [t]throughout all generations.

14 For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.

15 [e]The idols of the heathen *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths.

18 They that make them are like unto them: *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

19 Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

21 Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXXXVI.

An exhortation to give thanks to God for particular mercies.

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most potent of the vanquished kings, Amos ii. 9: or rather, as the first vanquished and slain, Num. xxi. 33, 34; Josh. xii. 2—4. Their slaughter led to the occupation of the Land of Promise, and seems to have made a deep impression upon the victorious people; see the places quoted.

11. *all the kingdoms*, &c.] Deut. iii. 21.

12. *gave their land*, &c.] Deut. iv. 38.

13, 14. *Thy name*, &c.] See Exod. iii. 15. Thy Name endures for ever on account of Thy glorious deeds (*vv.* 7, 8, 9, 10) in days past and now; for Jehovah will *judge*, *i.e.* vindicate His servants against oppression always; and *repent* Him of chastisement; and pity according to His mercies, Deut. xxxii. 36: see also Gen. xxx. 6; Pss. liv. 1, xc. 13, cii. 13.

15. *The idols of the heathen*, &c.] See Ps. cxv. 4, &c.; the latter part of *v.* 17 differs from Ps. cxv. 6, *noses have they, but they smell not*, but yet in a way (orig.) imitates it.

19. *Bless the LORD*, &c.] Pss. cxv. 10—12, cxviii. 2—4. The mention of the Levites is peculiar to this psalm.

21. *Blessed be the LORD*, &c.] The united prayer and blessing of all mentioned before, the house of Israel, of Aaron, of Levi, and all that fear God, and of the Psalmist himself. See Ps. cxxxiv. 3, in which verse, however, Jehovah's blessing is promised out of Zion. Here, on the other hand, His blessing begins with Zion and goes forth from thence.

Olshausen, J. and others esteem this variation of the sense of the place imitated unpleasing, and would alter the Hebrew text: but we must recollect other verses in the psalm which recal places of Scripture without exactly copying them (see *v.* 9 and *v.* 17 for instance), and interpret this verse apart from any special reference to the verse which it calls to mind. Jehovah is praised and blessed in Zion, and out of Zion His praise shall go forth unto all lands. Zion is put, as often, for Jerusalem where God dwells: and the word before us is descriptive of the day of the Psalmist, and prophetic of after days; at the very least, true in a sense above that which the Psalmist, looking simply to his own day, could intend.

"For," says Delitzsch, "has not Jehovah's blessing gone forth to all lands from Zion, and reached, too, those critics who cavil at the Word which themselves confirm?"

PSALM CXXXVI.

The Psalmist, *vv.* 1—9, celebrates Jehovah, Creator of heaven and earth; *vv.* 10—22, Redeemer of His people out of bondage, Leader through the waste, Giver of the land of promise and Slayer of His enemies; *v.* 23, Protector of His people always and at the present moment in trouble; and *vv.* 25, 26, the Universal Parent.

The words, Ezra iii. 11, suggest to Rosenmüller and others that the psalm may have been used at the foundation of the second temple; the Levites singing the first part of each verse, and the people responding. A great resemblance is pointed out (Thrupp, Vol. II. pp. 281, &c.) between the psalm and the confession in Neh. ch. ix. It is vain to inquire at what precise time a psalm with contents apposite to so many occasions may have been used first; but the date is without doubt after the exile. Somewhat similar responses of chorus or people are instanced in Exod. xv. 20, 21; Deut. xxvii. 15, &c.

David (1 Chro. xvi. 41) ordained that the Levites should continually chant before the

a Ps. 106. 1. & 107. 1. & 118. 1.

O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

b Gen. 1. 1.

5 [b]To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

c Gen. 1. 6. Jer. 10. 12.

6 [c]To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

d Gen. 1. 14.

7 [d]To him that made great lights: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

† Heb. *for the rulings by day.*

8 The sun †to rule by day: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

9 The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

e Exod. 12. 29.

10 [e]To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

f Exod. 13. 17.

11 [f]And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

12 With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

g Exod. 14. 21, 22.

13 [g]To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

h Exod. 14. 28. † Heb. *shaked off.*

15 [h]But †overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

i Exod. 15. 22.

16 [i]To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

17 To him which smote great kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

k Deut. 29. 7. Ps. 135. 10, 11.

18 [k]And slew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

l Numb. 21. 21.

19 [l]Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

m Numb. 21. 33.

20 [m]And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

n Josh. 12. 7.

21 [n]And gave their land for an

Lord a psalm, of which the burden should be, "That His mercy endureth for ever;" and such a psalm apparently was often used, 2 Chro. vii. 3 and xx. 21. The burden of this psalm occurs Pss. cvi. 1 and cxviii. 1. One characteristic of it is that it repeats words and phrases of other psalms (specially Ps. cxxxv.) and prophecies (specially Isaiah), with amplifications. The places are noted as they occur.

2, 3. *God of gods* and *Lord of lords*] Deut. x. 17, &c.

4. *who alone*, &c.] Pss. lxxii. 18, lxxxvi. 10, &c.

5. *by wisdom*, &c.] Prov. iii. 19; Jer. x. 12; Ps. civ. 24.

6. *stretched out*] Isai. xlii. 5, xliv. 24.

above the waters] See Ps. xxiv. 2; Ex. xx. 4. The waters of the great deep (Gen. vii. 11) are meant, above which the crust of earth is outspread. In Prov. viii. 27 the great deep encircles the earth.

Hengstenberg, Vol. II. p. 80, interprets the words of this verse, "Who stretched out the earth above, *i.e.* near to, and so as to stand over and overtop, the waters, and not be covered by them;" but this rendering does not seem to exhibit the force of the word translated "stretched out," which conveys the idea of stretching out as a crust or covering surface. It is also doubtful if the particle "above" (עַל) will bear the sense "near to" and "rising above," which this explanation demands.

7. *lights*] In Gen. i. 14—16, *luminaries*.

12. *With a strong hand*, &c.] Exod. xiii. 9, xv. 16, xxxii. 11; Deut. iv. 34, &c. *A strong hand* and *mighty arm* could alone rescue out of such perils.

13. *divided*] Emphatic: *divided*, so to say, *into pieces* or *parts* (in two parts, P. B. V.), instead of the expression used in Ex. xiv. 21, Ps. lxxviii. 13, "divided" or "parted."

15. *overthrew*] The same word as in Ex. xiv. 27, "shook off," "hurled," out of his chariot into the sea: the same word also is used, Ps. cix. 23, of locusts tossed about and floating upon the wind.

16. *To him which led*, &c.] Deut. viii. 15.

19—22. Compare Ps. cxxxv. 10—12, and the places quoted there from Deuteronomy.

heritage: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

22 *Even* an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

23 Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

25 Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

PSALM CXXXVII.

1 The constancy of the Jews in captivity. 7 The prophet curseth Edom and Babel.

BY the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

2 We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

3 For there they that carried us away captive required of us †a song; and they that †wasted us *required of*

† Heb. *the words of a song.*
† Heb. *laid us on heaps.*

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22. *Israel his servant*] Deut. xxxii. 36.

If the four verses 19—22 were omitted, the psalm would consist of 22 verses, one for each letter of the alphabet; and the phraseology of the above-named verses in the original is such that they would seem not improbably taken from the preceding psalm.

23. *Who remembered us*, &c.] Allusion is made to God's deliverance of His people since ancient days spoken of above; it may be, to the escape from Babylon, the crowning deliverance of all.

25. *Who giveth*, &c.] See Pss. civ. 27, cxlv. 15, cxlvii. 9.

The P. B. V. of the psalm adds a 27th verse, which is not in the Hebrew, Syriac, or Greek, but is in the Vulg.

PSALM CXXXVII.

It is difficult to decide the precise date of this psalm. The title is absent in the Hebrew: in the LXX. it is "for David," τῷ Δαυίδ, Cod. Alex.; τῷ Δαυὶδ Ἱερεμίου, Cod. Vat., *i.e.* "of Jeremiah for David." The passion and mournfulness of it, and the absence of any allusion to Jerusalem restored, favour the opinion that it was written during the actual captivity; and the stern imprecations at the end are suitable to the times before Babylon was actually destroyed. On the other hand, the tenses in *vv.* 1, 2 rather point to the past: the epithet applied to Babylon in *v.* 8, literally taken, seems to imply that its destruction was accomplished; and the words, "*Happy* (shall he be)" or "Happy is the man," &c. may describe the accomplishment of prophecy as well as its anticipation.

Babylon was taken by Cyrus, B.C. 538: the Jews were allowed to return, B.C. 536. Babylon was destroyed by Darius Hystaspes (Herod. III. 159) B.C., 516; and about the same time the temple was rebuilt: see note on *v.* 8.

1. *By the rivers of Babylon, there*, &c.] *There* is emphatic: "By the rivers of the city of our oppressors, *there* we sat," &c. The country of Babylon was fruitful, Isai. xxxvi. 17, and well watered by rivers and canals. The rivers were, besides Euphrates and Tigris, Eulaos and Chaboras, upon whose banks Ezekiel (i. 3), and Daniel (viii. 2), saw visions. The captive Israelites sat by the cool streams for meditation and repose, and wept when they looked upon the mighty river and level plain through which it ran, so different from scenes at home, the mountains that stand about Jerusalem and Siloah's brook that flowed softly. They hung their harps upon the willows bordering the stream, Lev. xxiii. 40, Isai. xliv. 4, according to the word of the son of Sirach, xxii. 6, μουσικὰ ἐν πένθει ἄκαιρος διήγησις, that music is pastime unsuitable to sorrow. There does not seem any ground for supposing the Psalmist and his companions to be Levites or Priests: rather, the psalm is the lament of private persons.

2. *We hanged our harps*, &c.] We hung up our useless and tuneless harps upon the willows that grew everywhere in the land, out of reach and sight, lest the importunity of our oppressors should solicit us to cast aside sorrow and sing to them a song of Zion—one of those famed songs of Zion of which all the heathen had heard. How could we sing Jehovah's songs in a land of aliens?

The harp was used for joyful occasions, Gen. xxxi. 27; Isai. xxiv. 8; 1 Chro. xxv. 3. There seems no special force in the words "*in the midst thereof;*" they mean simply "in the land," and indicate the multitudes of willows. A particular willow, the weeping willow, is still called "Salix Babylonica;" see the 'Dictionary of the Bible' in v.

3. *they that wasted*, &c.] The Hebrew word (תוללינו) is obscure: LXX. οἱ ἀπαγαγόντες ἡμᾶς. The P. B. V. is hard to account for.

us mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion.

4 How shall we sing the LORD's song in a †strange land?

† Heb. *land of a stranger?*

5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*.

6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above †my chief joy.

† Heb. *the head of my joy.*

7 Remember, O LORD, [a]the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, †Rase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof.

[a] Obad. 10, &c. † Heb. *Make bare.*

8 O daughter of Babylon, who art to be †destroyed; happy *shall he be*, †that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

† Heb. *wasted.* † Heb. *that recompenseth unto thee thy deed which thou didst to us.*

9 Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and [b]dasheth thy little ones against †the stones.

[b] Isai. 13. 16. † Heb. *the rock.*

PSALM CXXXVIII.

1 *David praiseth God for the truth of his word.* 4 *He prophesieth that the kings of the earth shall praise God.* 7 *He professeth his confidence in God.*

A Psalm of David.

I WILL praise thee with my whole heart: [a]before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

[a] Ps. 119. 46.

5, 6. *If I forget thee*, &c.] Heb. **may my right hand forget.**—The aposiopesis is emphatic: "May my right hand forget its cunning skill in striking the chords; may my tongue forget to sing, and cleave to my mouth; if I cease to prize Jerusalem above my chiefest joy; to desire its hallowed precincts above aught in life, or life itself."

7. *Remember, O Lord*, &c.] Remember, O Lord, to Edom's sorrow and discomfiture, that day (Ps. xxxvii. 13; Obad. 12, 13) of Jerusalem—that day of its visitation by Thee—when they, the kinsmen of Israel (Obad. 10, 12), aided and abetted the foe, and said, *Rase it, rase it*, &c., or, as marg., "Make bare." See Isai. xxxiv. 5; Lam. iv. 22, and Obadiah, for similar denunciations against Edom. See also Dean Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' II. pp. 556, 7.

8. *O daughter of Babylon*] A well-known periphrasis for Babylon, Isai. xlvii. 1; see also Isai. x. 32; Jer. xlvi. 11, &c.

who art to be destroyed] Rather, "who art destroyed." The rendering of Aq. προνενομευμένη, and that of the LXX. ἡ ταλαίπωρος, seem to imply this meaning. The P.B.V. is "wasted with misery." A prophetical description probably of the future as accomplished: see Isai. xxi. 9, xxxiii. 1, and passim. The Psalmist, in these latter verses, puts himself in the midst of the desolated city, and singles out a circumstance of horror (Isai. xiv. 21; Hos. x. 14) that graphically paints the scene. Hupfeld and many others conceive that the Hebrew word, rendered above "destroyed," is to be referred to the partial destruction of Babylon under Cyrus; and the wish that follows to the complete destruction under Darius Hystaspes. The expression in this view is unpoetical: the wish for the utter destruction of the city already partially destroyed sounds exceedingly harsh; and it is not according to the manner of the psalms and of prophecy to draw fine distinctions between utter and partial destruction.

In explanation of these stern denunciations against Edom and Babylon we must recollect the customs of the day (2 K. viii. 12; Hos. xiii. 16, &c.; 'Il.' XXII. 63; XXIV. 732); further, that Babylon's destruction was the fulfilment of prophecy (Isai. xiii. 16—18, xxi. 9, xxxiii. 1, &c.); and that Babylon even in the Old Testament Scriptures assumes the character of a city opposed to God and to goodness (Isai. xiv. and passim). If the Psalmist had simply expressed a desire and longing for Babylon's destruction he would only have expressed what we meet with implicitly in the pages of all the prophets in that day. The particular expressions used sound terrible; but see also the remarks on Ps. cix. A Christian spirit must not be looked for throughout this ancient collection of the songs and psalms of a people warlike, fierce, and hardly tried as the Jews: it is truly remarkable that among so many psalms of various authors and of all ages only a few words here and there grate harshly upon the sentiments of Christians!

PSALM CXXXVIII.

A psalm praising Jehovah for His mercy shewn, upon some special occasion, by His reply to prayer, and performance of His promises beyond expectation, *vv.* 1—3: prophesying that all the realms of the earth, on hearing of it, would celebrate His glorious deeds, and worship, *v.* 4: ending with a confident expression of trust in His continued protection, *v.* 7, and prayer for the completion of His work of grace, *v.* 8.

The inscription assigns the psalm to David, and its spirit and manner, generally, fall in with

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

6 Though the LORD *be* high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD,

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the inscription. It may have been written when he ascended the throne after the death of Saul, and after his escape from innumerable perils, in connection, Delitzsch imagines, with Jehovah's promises, 2 S. vii., of which many expressions in the psalm remind us. The connection between this psalm (see *v.* 6) and the next is manifest.

1. *before the gods*] Some (LXX., Luther, Calvin, &c.) interpret these words of the angels, and compare Ps. xxix. 1; but it is doubtful if the Hebrew word, Elohim, used nakedly and without any explanation, can have this meaning: it is also, as it would seem, in this connection, pointless: others (Rabbins, Flamin., Delitzsch, &c.) interpret "the great ones of the earth," and compare verse 4 below, and Pss. lxxxii. 1, cxix. 46, &c., but this interpretation, too, seems to give no special force to the passage. Probably (Aq., Symm., Jer., &c.) the meaning is, "Before, or, in presence of, the gods of the heathen, *i.e.* in scorn of, in sight of, the idols, who can do nothing, I will praise Jehovah, who does miracles for me and His people." For a similar expression, see Ps. xxiii. 5, Heb.: see also Pss. xcv. 3, xcvi. 5, for places in which the Hebrew word "gods" is used probably for idols.

2. *I will worship*, &c.] If David wrote the psalm he must use the word *temple* for the earlier simple sanctuary on Zion; see Ps. v. 7, and note. "I will worship," he says, "turning towards Thy sanctuary in which Thine ark abides." See 1 K. viii. 48.

for thou hast magnified, &c.] *i.e.* "Thou hast performed Thy promise above that which Thy Name and Fame as a faithful performer of promises led us to expect and to hope." A special promise and its abundant fulfilment seem referred to.

3. *In the day*, &c.] The genuine confidence of David: compare his humility, *v.* 6.

4. *All the kings*, &c.] Hiram king of Tyre (2 S. v. 11; 1 Chro. xiv. 1), and Toi king of Hamath (2 S. viii. 10), congratulated David upon his accession, and are supposed to be here chiefly intended. But doubtless all the kings of the earth are meant; they all shall praise Thee when they hear the "*words of thy mouth*," *i.e.* Thy promises made to David and to Thy people and fulfilled literally and above the letter, *v.* 2: compare Pss. lxviii. 29, cii. 15, cxlviii. 11, &c. In Isai. xlix. 7, lii. 15, lx. 3, are somewhat similar prophetical idealizations of kings and peoples worshipping Jehovah or His Christ. It is to be noticed that He to whom the psalm is addressed is not named till verse 4. See Ps. cxiv.

5. *Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD*] *i.e.* "of the ways" or "doings," Ps. ciii. 7, "of the Lord." Similar expressions, Heb., occur Pss. lxxxvii. 3, cv. 2.

6. *Though the LORD*, &c.] Similar words of David occur 2 S. vi. 21, xxiii. 1; Pss. xviii. 28, 29, cxiii. 5, cxxxi. 1: see too Prov. xvi. 18. The next clause is obscure. "As for the proud" (see Ps. ci. 5), "He knoweth," *i.e.* notices, observes, sees them (Ps. xciv. 11; Jer. xxix. 23), though He is "afar off" in heaven, cf. Ps. cxxxix. 2, His place of dwelling.

7. *Though I walk*, &c.] See Ps. xxiii. 4.

thou wilt revive me] See Ps. lxxi. 20; and cxix. passim.

thou shalt stretch forth, &c.] See 1 S. xxiv. 6; Ps. x. 12; Job i. 12.

against the wrath, &c.] *i.e.* "against my wrathful furious enemies."

8. *will perfect*, &c.] "Will complete and fully execute all that is to be done for me within and without."

the works of thine own hands] The creatures which Thou hast made with Thine hands and Thy fingers, Ps. viii., and specially those whom Thou hast singled out from the whole world, and set apart, and made near to Thyself. See Ps. xcii. 4, 5; also 2 S. vii. 25.

endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

PSALM CXXXIX.

1 *David praiseth God for his allseeing providence,* 17 *and for his infinite mercies.* 19 *He defieth the wicked.* 23 *He prayeth for sincerity.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me.*

2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

3 Thou [1]compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways.

4 For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

5 Thou hast beset me behind and

[1] Or, *winnowest.*

PSALM CXXXIX.

The inscription assigns this psalm to David; its wonderful spirit, originality, majesty, and its correspondence with psalms undoubtedly Davidic, support the authority of the title. Many commentators (Delitzsch, &c.), on account of certain Chaldee words and phrases in it, imagine it written after the captivity, and interpret the inscription as indicating that the psalm is worthy of the great king and like his other compositions. The argument from the occurrence of Chaldee phrases is not very convincing, unless it can be shewn that such phrases were certainly introduced into the Hebrew language after the captivity. The writer of this psalm must have been gifted, almost above all the sons of men, with poetic genius, as well as with divinely inspired insight. An age of strong faith seems most likely to have produced such a strain; rather than a time of decline, and of the deterioration of taste and of the spirit of a people. The early part of the psalm describes God's omniscience, *vv.* 1—6; His omnipresence and omnipotence are described, *vv.* 7—12; the latter as exhibited in the wondrous formation of man (*vv.* 13—16). The Psalmist's deep delight at the constant study of God's thoughts (*vv.* 17, 18); his horror of the wicked who use such a Name for crime (*vv.* 19—22). Earnest prayer is offered (*vv.* 23, 24), that God the searcher of hearts would search his heart, lighten his eye, and direct him to life eternal, to the end. "Language," says Herder, 'Sermons,' Vol. IV. p. 69, "utterly fails me in the exposition of this psalm. Let any one read it, and he will see that, after the fullest explanation of every verse and of the purport of the whole, the psalm is at each reading new; each word suggestive perpetually of new thoughts."

The Alexandrian copy of the LXX. seems to attribute this psalm to Zacharias in the day of captivity. But the words perhaps mean that Zacharias in his captivity soothed himself with the study of this psalm; and good authorities attribute the reference to Zacharias in the inscription to a later hand.

1. *thou hast searched,* &c.] Lit. "Oh Lord, Thou hast searched me and knowest." Thou hast searched out and knowest (all that relates to me, body, soul, and spirit) as a man fully knows that which he has long and carefully studied! The past tense has the force of past and present.

2. *Thou*] Emphatic, "Thou and none beside." *Downsitting* opposed to *uprising* seems to mean "resting," *i.e.* at night from work. The use of the same Hebrew words in Ps. cxxvii. 2 suggests this interpretation.

afar off] Does this mean "afar off and out of heaven thy dwelling-place," an image common in Scripture (Ps. cxxxviii. 6; Jer. xxiii. 23, and fully expressed in Ps. xxxiii. 13—15)? or "afar off and before conceived of the brain, and long long before uttered of the tongue!" The latter idea is the more exquisite; and most suited to this psalm, which stays not at the surface, but expresses the deepest depths of divine truth for which the words of the writer scarcely suffice. The thought just born, and in time far removed from utterance, is viewed as at a distance, and seen in its earliest birth, afar off, by God.

3. *Thou compassest,* &c.] *i.e.* "surroundest and dost fence in, so that nothing can escape the vigilant eye that watches the fenced path:" or, rather, as in the margin, "winnowest," *i.e.* "dost examine," "sift," and "thoroughly understand;" a metaphor from a winnower who separates minutest atoms of chaff from the corn.

acquainted] *i.e.* "thoroughly," as "by long custom and perpetual consideration of them." See the use of the word הסכנתי in Num. xxii. 30.

4. *there is not a word,* &c.] "The instant a thought is conceived in the brain and before the tongue has begun to be stirred up to utter it aloud, Thou knowest it thoroughly! How much more my ways and words and deeds!"

5. *Thou hast beset,* &c.] "I cannot move to right or left or forwards or backwards without Thy permission;" "Thine hand is laid upon me always and holds me with force invisible but irresistible;" see Job iii. 23, and xiii. 21, 27. These palpable images paint God as He is, always close to us, always directing, always restraining.

before, and laid thine hand upon me.

6 *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it.

7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 [a]If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*.

9 *If* I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

12 Yea, [b]the darkness †hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: †the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee*.

13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth †right well.

15 My ‖substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book †all *my members* were written, ‖*which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

17 [c]How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

18 *If* I should count them, they

[a] Amos 9. 2, 3, 4.
[b] Job 26. 6. Hebr. 4. 13.
† Heb. *darkeneth not.*
† Heb. *as is the darkness, so is the light.*
† Heb. *greatly.*
‖ Or, *strength,* or, *body.*
† Heb. *all of them.*
‖ Or, what *days they should be fashioned.*
[c] Ps. 40. 5.

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6. *Such knowledge*, &c.] With these words ends the description of God's omniscience; in the next *vv.* His omnipresence and omnipotence are painted.

7. *Whither shall I go*, &c.] The exclamation in the text is not suggestive of terror; but of awe and wonder, as of a feeble helpless creature, in proximity always to closely-encompassing, irresistible, intelligence and might!

8. *hell*] The deepest recesses of Hades under the earth are contrasted with heaven: Heb. "if I should make Hades my resting-place."

9. *the wings of the morning*] The morning light is figured with wings which carry it in a moment from the east to the utmost parts of the west. The wind has wings, Ps. xviii. 10: the sun, Mal. iv. 2.

10. *lead me*, &c.] "Beyond the sea and far out of sight of man, Thy hand will lead and Thy right hand will hold me, so that I cannot escape!"

11. *If I say*, &c.] "If I say, Darkness will cover me, and night shall be light (or instead of light) around me—Yea, the darkness," &c.: *v.* 12 is the reply to *v.* 11, as *v.* 10 to *v.* 9.

13. *possessed*] The Hebrew word will bear the meaning "formed," *i.e.* "created:" "as Thou didst form and fashion, so surely Thou dost know completely and comprehend, the constitution of my reins and secret hidden parts." The reins are mentioned perhaps as the seat of tenderest feeling and sentiment.

covered me] *i.e.* "clothed and protected me with flesh, bones, skin, &c., a covering inimitable by art," Job x. 11: or, rather, "woven with curious skill and interlacing of bones, sinews, veins, &c. like an elaborate curious garment."

14. *my soul knoweth*, &c.] *i.e.* "that Thy works are fearfully wonderful."

15. *curiously wrought*] "As an embroidered garment, diversified with colours (Exod. xxvi. 36), my substance was curiously and artistically (yea with art inimitable) wrought in the utter darkness of the womb." The phrase "lowest parts of the earth" seems to express a chamber of utter darkness out of reach of the eye of man or light of God.

16. *Thine eyes*, &c.] "Thine eyes saw me, in the womb, an embryo, an atom, unformed (glomus), invisible to any other ken; and in Thy book (Ps. lvi. 8; Mal. iii. 16) were *they* all written: *my days* were fashioned and delineated in Thy Spirit and written in Thy book, when as yet not one of them was." "My members" is not in the original; the A. V. must be altered as above to express a sense which Job x. 5—11 illustrates.

17. *How precious*, &c.] "How dear to me are Thy wondrous thoughts displayed in these miracles of creation! how I delight to dwell upon them! how great and awful is the sum of them! If I count, they are more in

are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

19 Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.

20 For they speak against thee wickedly, *and* thine enemies take *thy name* in vain.

21 Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

24 And see if *there be any* †wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

† Heb. *way of pain, or grief.*

PSALM CXL.

1 *David prayeth to be delivered from Saul and Doeg.* 8 *He prayeth against them.* 12 *He comforteth himself by confidence in God.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

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number than the sand: I count them all the day long till sleep overtakes me; I sleep and wake from sleep and am still with Thee, still counting the endless tale of Thy thoughts, Thy wondrous designs of art and wisdom displayed in man!" Others explain, "How incomprehensible are Thy thoughts!" referring to Dan. ii. 11 for this interpretation of the word (יקרו) of dubious import. But the interpretation first given is the more refined: and the second introduces a repetition of the sentiment of *v.* 6.

19. *Surely thou*, &c.] The transition from the contemplation of God in His works to the mention of His enemies recals Ps. civ. 35. See the note there. The exquisite meditations upon God's attributes in this psalm may also have been suggested by sharp trial caused by the enemies of God: of the nature of it no hint is given.

20. *For they speak against thee*, &c.] The import of the text as it stands would seem to be, "They speak of Thee with evil purpose; and take in vain Thy Name (Exod. xx 7), (being) Thine enemies." The words seem to convey the idea that the impious men alluded to were in the strict sense God's enemies and revilers of God. The renderings of the LXX. and Vulg. of this *v.* are very different. Symmachus renders the latter clause ἐπήρθησαν ματαίως οἱ ἐναντίοι σου, *i.e.* "Thine enemies, in vain, are risen up against Thee," which may be the true rendering. Chrysostom, Comm. on 1 Cor. xiii., remarks upon this verse and the next, "That now a higher philosophy is required of us than of these men, for they are ordered to hate not only impiety but impious persons, lest their friendship should be an occasion to them of going astray, &c." The remark seems needless in explanation of this place. The spirit of Christianity scarcely enjoins us to love the enemies of God: and the expression of the Psalmist conveys the idea rather of the Psalmist's hatred of impiety in the abstract than of particular impious men. So Hengstenberg, Vol. IV. p. 114, remarks, "The Psalmist speaks of wicked men as such, not of his own enemies as wicked men." It is totally adverse to the spirit of Christianity to look upon our enemies in the light of God's enemies, as the Jews were sometimes prone to do: but of this spirit not a trace appears in the psalm.

21. *grieved*] Rather, "sorely grieved and horror-stricken."

22. *I count them mine enemies*] "But my hatred of them is as Thine enemies."

23. *Search me*, &c.] A prayer that God would search him out and see if aught in his own spirit is displeasing to Him; vouchsafe him light to find the right path and strength to walk in it. The word (עצב) rendered "any wicked way" means either (marg.) "way of pain or grief," or "way of idols." The latter interpretation is too elliptical; the meaning of the other is paraphrased above. The "*way everlasting*," *i.e.* the safe, secure, divine way (Psalm i. 6), which leads to everlasting prosperity. Böttcher declares these latter verses unworthy of the rest of the psalm and added by a later hand: others (Luther, Delitzsch, &c.) feel that the psalm would be imperfect without them; and that they are the very point to which it tends from the beginning. Hatred and abhorrence of the impiety which disowns or despises Him, Whom the Psalmist feels to be omnipresent, omniscient, all good, is the almost inevitable fruit of the intense realization of His perfections which this psalm discovers: and a prayer to Him Who knows the heart that He would move the spirit of the singer to his greatest good, is so natural and appropriate, that no fitter conclusion could be imagined.

PSALM CXL.

A prayer for divine aid against enemies powerful and slanderous, who stir up daily strife, and surround the Psalmist with snares

DELIVER me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the †violent man;

2 Which imagine mischiefs in *their* heart; continually are they gathered together *for* war.

3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; [a]adders' poison *is* under their lips. Selah.

4 Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from the violent man; who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

5 The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set gins for me. Selah.

6 I said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

7 O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

8 Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; ‖*lest* they exalt themselves. Selah.

‖ Or, *let them* not *be exalted*.

9 *As for* the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

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and nets, *vv.* 2—6: whose schemes, nevertheless, will come to nought through God's aid often experienced before, *vv.* 7—9; when the heads of the plots imagined against the Psalmist will be punished according to their deserving, by a Righteous Judge Who regards the upright, *vv.* 12, 13.

There is a close resemblance between this psalm and Pss. lviii., lxiv.: also between it and the following Pss. cxli., cxlii., cxliii., of which the author may be the same. It contains many uncommon words and phrases, *e.g.* in *vv.* 2, 8, and its manner is wholly Davidical. A common opinion is, that it was composed by David with reference to the machinations of Doeg and other slanderous persons in the time of Saul, 1 S. xxii. 9, xxiii. 19, &c. Others, Rudinger, Delitzsch, &c., think that Ahithophel is referred to, and the date of the psalm the flight before Absalom. The Syr. adds to the title, "when Saul cast the javelin against David."

1. *from the evil man*] The singular is used collectively; "from evil men." See *vv.* 4, 8.

preserve me] Or, "Thou wilt preserve me." The tense is changed, and may express either a prayer or confident hope of aid.

2. *Which imagine*, &c.] The plural in this verse shews that the sing. in the verse preceding is used collectively.

are they gathered together for war] The meaning is rather, "stir up," "excite," war: see Deut. ii. 5, 9, 24, orig.; Prov. xv. 18. So the Syr., Chald., Hupfeld, Delitzsch, &c. LXX. παρετάσσοντο πολέμους, and so Vulg.

3. *They have sharpened*, &c.] Like a sharp arrow; see Ps. cxx. 4: or, as a serpent's tongue, quick, agile, pointed, is sharpened for a stroke. See Pss. x. 7, lv. 21, lxiv. 3.

adders' poison is under their lips] Cf. the expression, S. of S. iv. 11: also Ps. lviii. 4.

4. *Keep me, O LORD*, &c.] The second clause of the first versicle of this *v.* is the same as the second versicle of *v.* 1, which seems the burden of the song.

to overthrow my goings] See Pss. xxxv. 6 (note), lviii. 10. The meaning is, "to direct my steps, or feet, to ruin."

5. *The proud have hid*, &c.] The artifices of the Psalmist's enemies are compared to the stratagems by which hunters entrap their prey. Similar images Pss. ix. 16, xxxi. 4, cxlii. 3, &c.

by the wayside] *i.e.* "by the way in which I am to go," Pss. xxiii. 3, cxlii. 3. See too, 1 S. xxiii. 23, the words of Saul to the Ziphites, to which, possibly, allusion is made. The tenses in the orig. have the force of past and present, see *v.* 2.

7. *the strength of my salvation*] Or, "of my deliverance," *i.e.* "my strong Deliverer." *Thou hast covered*, and wilt surely cover in time to come like a helmet, *my head*. Eph. vi. 17; 1 Thess. v. 8.

the day of battle] LXX. πολέμου, Vulg. "belli:" properly, "preparation for battle."

8. *Grant not, O LORD, the desires*, &c.] *i.e.* to take and destroy me. The word rendered "desires" occurs only in this place. The LXX. render μὴ παραδῷς με, Κύριε, ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας μου ἁμαρτωλῷ. They may have read מאויי. The word "wicked device" occurs also only here.

lest they exalt, &c.] Or, "they exalt themselves," a separate versicle, after David's manner.

9. *As for the head of those*, &c.] There are various interpretations of this verse, according to the meaning attributed to *head*. Moll interprets as "the chiefs, or leaders;" others (which seems best), "the head," *i.e.* "the life," of those that encompass me about.

let the mischief] *i.e.* "Let the mischievous work of their own lips fall, as some heavy weight, upon them (the word "head" or "life"

10 Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

11 Let not †‖an evil speaker be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow *him*.

† Heb. *a man of tongue.* ‖ Or, *an evil speaker, a wicked man of violence, be established in the earth: let him be hunted to his overthrow.*

12 I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor.

13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

PSALM CXLI.

1 *David prayeth that his suit may be acceptable,* 3 *his conscience sincere,* 7 *and his life safe from snares.*

A Psalm of David.

LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

2 Let my prayer be †set forth be-

† Heb. *directed*

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in the Heb. implying the plur.) and destroy them; let the calumnies which they heap upon me fall upon and cover themselves;" cf. Ps. vii. 16.

10. *Let burning coals fall,* &c.] *Fall;* or, rather, be "dropped" or "hurled" as hail from above. But this is the rendering of the Keri or marginal reading: the reading in the text of the Heb. Bible would give, "Let them drop or hurl burning coals," &c., cf. Ps. lv. 3: *burning coals,* Ps. xviii. 13, 14, see note.

let them be cast, &c.] Heb. "Let Him, *i.e.* God, cast them or cause them to go into." The LXX. interpret ἐν πυρὶ καταβαλεῖ αὐτούς, *i. e.* igne, seu fulmine, dejiciet eos: and similarly Luther and others. But it is better to interpret "fire," "burning coals," and "deep pits," as symbolic of various perils; see Ps. lxvi. 12. The word rendered *deep pits* occurs only here. The interpretation is from the Rabbins: Symm., Targ., βοθύνους. The LXX. render ἐν ταλαιπωρίαις. The Syr. omits the word: Perowne, from the Arab., interprets "floods of water."

that they rise not up again] Ps. xxxvi. 12; Isai. xiv. 21, xxvi. 14.

11. *Let not an evil speaker*] Heb. "a man of tongue;" *i.e.* a calumnious tongue. See Job xiii. 7; Ps. ci. 5; Ecclus. viii. 4. Some imagine Doeg to be intended: but it is better to suppose the word used for a class.

established in the earth] "Shall have no settled dwelling; shall be driven from the haunts of men:" Pss. ci. 7, cii. 28.

evil shall hunt, &c.] "As for the violent man, calamity, corresponding to his wrong-doing, shall hunt and find him out (as a beast, or bird) to ruin (Heb. "ruins," ἅπαξ λεγ., *i.e.* one ruin after another)." So LXX., Vulg., &c. The violent man and the calumnious tongue point to the same person.

13. *shall dwell in thy presence*] *i.e.* under Thy protection, as children under that of parents. Ps. xvi. 11.

PSALM CXLI.

This psalm is entitled a Psalm of David, and the contents do not seem to be inconsistent with the correctness of the inscription. It is true that its early date has been called in question on account of its involved style and the obscurity of a portion of its contents, but it is equally true that its originality may be defended on almost the same grounds.

The common opinion of those who assign the psalm to David is, that it was composed during the time of his persecution by Saul. (Cf. 1 S. xxiv. 2.) Delitzsch, who thinks it probable that the psalm was written in imitation of David's style, assigns as its historical ground the flight before Absalom, and the temporary exclusion of David from the worship of the sanctuary; and he sees in it an anticipation of the time when the new rulers should become a prey to the indignation of the people, and the people should be restored to their rightful allegiance to their king. The points of connection (see Note 1 at end, and int. to Pss. cxl., cxlii.) with Ps. cxl. and with the following psalms seem to warrant the inference that they were composed at the same time, and by the same writer.

The beginning and the end of the psalm are tolerably clear, but the middle of it is involved in great obscurity, partly by reason of the ambiguity of the expressions, and partly by reason of our ignorance of the circumstances under which the psalm was composed.

1. *I cry unto thee*] Lit. "I have called upon Thee."

make haste unto me] David generally, if not invariably, adds "for my help" (cf. Pss. xxii. 19, xxxviii. 22, xl. 13), but in Ps. lxx. 1, 5 (which is a composite psalm, and perhaps from the hand of a later writer; see note) both forms occur.

2. *Let my prayer be set forth*] The same verb is used in 2 Chro. xxix. 35 and xxxv. 10, 16, of the sacrificial service of the temple.

as incense] Lit. "incense." Cf. Ps. xi. 1 for the omission of the particle of comparison. The offering of incense appears to have accompanied that of the morning and evening sacrifice (see Exod. xxx. 7, 8 and note in loc.), and the rising of the smoke of the incense seems

fore thee *as* incense; *and* the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

4 Incline not my heart to *any* evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.

5 [1] Let the righteous smite me; *it shall be* a kindness: and let him reprove me; *it shall be* an excellent oil, *which* shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also *shall be* in their calamities.

6 When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.

7 Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth.

[1] *Let righte- smite ...indly, re- ...e me; ...ot ...r pre- ...s oil ...k my ...l, &c.*

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to have been symbolical of the ascent to heaven of the prayers of the worshippers (cf. Luke i. 10; Rev. v. 8, viii. 3, 4). The Psalmist prays that whilst debarred from the appointed services of the tabernacle (or temple), his prayer may rise with acceptance before God, like the cloud of incense, and may prove as acceptable in His sight as the sacrifices of the sanctuary. Cf. Ps. v. 3, and note in loc., also li. 17. The parallelism shews that the "lifting up of the hands" in the second clause of the verse is equivalent to the "prayer" of the first clause (cf. Ps. xxviii. 2 and note, lxiii. 4. cxxxiv. 2). The word rendered "sacrifice" is in the Heb. *minchah*, but as it seems here to denote the whole of the evening sacrifice, *i.e.* the lamb together with the flour and oil (Exod. xxix. 40, 41; Num. xxviii. 5, 8), it is rightly so rendered. Cf. 2 K. xvi. 15; Dan. ix. 21. It is probably used in this place because it has the same signification as that which is rendered "lifting up," viz. a *gift*.

3. *Set a watch*] See Note 2 at end. The Psalmist had need of special watchfulness over his tongue, lest he should be betrayed into the use of rash and unguarded language (cf. Pss. xxxiv. 13, xxxviii. 13, xxxix. 1).

keep the door of my lips] Cf. Micah vii. 5, "keep the doors (or openings) of thy mouth;" also Eurip. πύλαι στόματος and Homer ('Il.' IV. 350; 'Od.' I. 64, &c.) ἕρκος ὀδόντων. In Egyptian the same word denotes both *door* and *mouth*. Cf. Deut. viii. 3; Ps. lxxxix. 34.

4. *evil thing*] Cf. Ps. lxiv. 5; Eccles. viii. 5: and, as the opposite to this, Ps. xlv. 1, "a good matter."

with men that work iniquity] A peculiar form of the Heb. plural for "men" is here used which is found elsewhere only in Prov. viii. 4 and Isai. liii. 3. The word denotes *great men*, *men of rank* or *renown*. The word translated "practise" occurs in the same form in no other place, nor is the word translated "dainties" used elsewhere.

5. *Let the righteous smite me*, &c.] This verse is extremely obscure. The first clause may be rendered thus, "(If) a righteous man smite me, it shall be a kindness (Vulg. "beneficium erit"); and if he rebuke me, (such) oil for the head my head shall not refuse." Or it may be rendered, "Let a righteous man smite me lovingly, let him rebuke me; my head shall not refuse head-oil" (*i.e.* its customary anointing). The meaning, in either case, seems to be that the reproofs of a friend would be taken, as designed, in good part, and neither resented, nor deemed occasion for mourning. See Note 3 at end. The literal rendering of the second clause is, "for yet, and my prayer (shall be) in (or against) their evil deeds." The meaning probably is, "I will continue to encounter the evil deeds of my adversaries with no other weapon than prayer." Cf. Ps. cix. 4, 28.

6. *When their judges*, &c.] This and the following verse are equally, or yet more obscure. The "judges," or princes (for the word is applicable to rulers in general), may be identical with the "great men" of *v.* 4. The verb rendered "overthrown" (or more literally "cast-down") is in the past tense, which is probably, here, as elsewhere, expressive of the certainty of the doom foretold. The verse may be translated thus: "Their rulers (or leaders) are cast down (*i.e.* shall certainly be cast down, and are already beheld by the Psalmist as cast down) the sides of the rock; and they (*i.e.* the people) shall hear my words, for they are sweet." LXX. Κατεπόθησαν ἐχόμενα πέτρας οἱ κριταὶ αὐτῶν. Jerome translates, "Sublati sunt juxta petram judices eorum." Prayer-Book Version, "Let their judges be overthrown in stony places." The verb rendered "overthrown" is used of Jezebel in 2 K. ix. 33, "Throw her down. So they threw her down." It deserves notice that the word rendered "dainties" in *v.* 4 is cognate to the word rendered "are sweet" in this verse.

7. *Our bones are scattered*, &c.] The obscurity of this psalm here reaches its culminating point, and it appears impossible to ascertain the meaning with certainty. It may be as follows, "Just as when one furrows and cuts into (or breaks up) the earth (with a view of scattering seed in it), so (*i.e.* in the purpose of the Psalmist's adversaries) our bones were scattered at the mouth of the grave." The introduction of the word "wood" into

8 But mine eyes *are* unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; †leave not my soul destitute.

† Heb. *make not my soul bare.*

9 Keep me from the snares *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal †escape.

† Heb. *pass over*

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the A.V. needlessly involves and obscures the drift of the passage. In support of the interpretation given above, it may be observed, (1) that it is in entire harmony with the verses which follow, in which the Psalmist prays or predicts that his enemies may or will fall into the very snares which they had laid for himself and his people; (2) that the word rendered "cleaveth" is the same word which is used in 2 Chro. xxv. 12 of the inhabitants of Seir who were thrown from the rock and "broken in pieces;" and (3) that the two past tenses "were overthrown," *v.* 6, and "were scattered," *v.* 7, are thus consistently interpreted. The meaning of the whole would be as follows: In spite of the continued machinations of his adversaries and rebukes of his friends, the Psalmist expresses his determination in *v.* 5 to have recourse to no other weapon than prayer. In *vv.* 6 and 7 he expresses his full conviction that although it was the design of his enemies to destroy himself and his followers, and to scatter their bones, nevertheless God, in His righteous providence, would so defeat their counsels and turn them against themselves, that they should perish by a destruction similar to that which they had prepared for him, whilst he, whose eyes had been ever fixed upon the Lord, should entirely escape. It must not be overlooked that the figurative language here employed occurs in other passages, either separately or combined, as *e.g.* in Jer. l. 17, where Israel is described as "a scattered sheep" (the same word used in *v.* 7, "our bones are scattered"); and in the same verse it is declared that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had "broken his bones." The same word occurs again Ps. liii. 5, "God hath scattered the bones of him that encamped against thee."

8. *But mine eyes*, &c.] Rather, "For mine eyes," &c. This expression of the ground of the Psalmist's confidence seems to refer back to *v.* 6. Cf. Ps. xxv. 15. The language of the psalm from this verse is simple and analogous to that of the earlier psalms.

leave not my soul destitute] Or, "pour not out my soul," *i.e.* unto death. Vulg. "ne effundas." Cf. Isai. liii. 12, "He hath poured out His soul unto death."

9. *Keep me*] The word "keep" seems to look back to *v.* 3, where a cognate noun, or, as some think, the same verb, is used. See Note 2 at end.

from the snares] Lit. "from the hands of the snare," in reference probably to *v.* 6, "stony places," which is literally *the hands of the rock.* Cf. Ps. cxl. 5.

10. *into their own nets*] The word rendered "nets" occurs only in this place, as the closely corresponding word in Ps. cxl. 10, which is rendered "deep pits," occurs there only. It seems not improbable that the same word stood originally in the text in both places, and should be rendered *pits* in both. Cf. Ps. xxxv. 7, where, according to the A. V. (but see note in loc.), the net which is to catch the adversaries was digged by them *in a pit* for the Psalmist. Cf. Pss. vii. 16, lvii. 6; Prov. xxvi. 27, xxviii. 10.

whilst that I withal escape] Rather, "whilst I pass over (*i.e.* in safety) at the same time." Cf. Ps. iv. 8, and note in loc. Jerome has "simul autem ego transibo." The pronoun is emphatic.

NOTES on PSALM CXLI.

1. Amongst the points of connection with the preceding psalm, we may compare:

(1) האזינה קולי, *v.* 1, with cxl. 6.
(2) *v.* 3. ,, איש לשון, cxl. 11.
(3) שמרה, *v.* 3. and שמרני, *v.* 9. ,, cxl. 4.
(4) נצרה, *v.* 3. ,, cxl. 1, 4.
(5) יהוה אדני, *v.* 8. ,, cxl. 7.
(6) פח, *v.* 9. ,, cxl. 5.
(7) יקשו and מוקשות, *v.* 9. ,, cxl. 5.
(8) יפלו במכמריו, *v.* 10, with יפילם במהמרות, cxl. 10.

2. שָׁמְרָה as a noun is ἁ. λ. As the imperative with ה paragog., it occurs three times, viz. 1 Chro. xxix. 18; Ps. xxv. 20; and Ps. lxxxvi. 2. It has been supposed that the Psalmist has omitted the noun after שיתה and that שמרה like נצרה should be taken as an imperative. The rendering would then be, "Set, O Lord, a watch, or a muzzle (משמר, or מחסום as in Ps. xxxix. 1), upon my mouth." Others take נצרה as a noun, and render the verse thus; "Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, a guard upon the door of my lips." Thus the LXX.: Θοῦ,

Κύριε, φυλακὴν τῷ στόματί μου, καὶ θύραν περιοχῆς περὶ τὰ χείλη μου. נִצְּרָה may be Imp. Kal. with *dag. dirimens* as Prov. iv. 13.

3. Thirty-six MSS. read יָנִיא instead of יָנִי. The LXX. read ἔλαιον δὲ ἁμαρτωλοῦ μὴ λιπανάτω τὴν κεφαλήν μου. Jerome translates: "oleum amaritudinis non impinguet caput meum."

PSALM CXLII.

David sheweth that in his trouble all his comfort was in prayer unto God.

[1]Maschil of David; A Prayer when he was in the cave.

I CRIED unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

2 I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 [1]I looked on *my* right hand, and

[1] Or, *A Psalm of David, giving instruction.*

[1] Or, *Look on the right hand, and see.*

PSALM CXLII.

This psalm, which is the last which bears a title referring to the persecutions of Saul, is supposed, like the lviith, to describe David's emotions and supplications in the cave of Adullam, or of Engedi. The similarity of tone between this and the psalms of the earlier books is noticed by Hupfeld.

The allusion in *v.* 3 to the snare privily laid for the Psalmist by his enemies connects this psalm with *vv.* 9, 10 of the preceding, and both with Ps. lvii. 6, possibly also with 1 S. xxiv 11. Cf. also Ps. cxl. 5.

The psalm is expressive of the deepest sense of danger and of desertion, amounting almost to despair. But a conviction of the utter hopelessness of his condition, so far as human succour was concerned, serves to excite within the breast of the Psalmist a determination to trust more implicitly and more exclusively in God. This resolution, as in other psalms of a similar character, converts his valley of Achor into a door of hope; and the psalm ends with a bright description of a morning of gladness succeeding to a night of sorrow. The writer anticipates, moreover, the joy and gratitude with which the righteous would hail his deliverance.

1. *I cried*] Rather, "I cry."

with my voice] See on Ps. iii. 4.

did I make, &c.] Rather, "I make supplication." This and the following verses agree very closely with the beginning of Ps. lxxvii. See notes in loc.

2. *I poured out*, &c.] Rather, "I pour out, ...I make known." Cf. the title of Ps. cii. with this and the next verse.

3. *was overwhelmed*] Rather, "is overwhelmed," lit. "veils itself," or "is darkened." See note on Ps. lxxvii. 3. The verb in this form occurs also in Pss. lxxvii. 3 (ascribed to Asaph), cvii. 5 (anon.), and cxliii. 4, ascribed to David: elsewhere only in Jonah ii. 8, and Lam. ii. 12.

then thou knewest my path] Lit. "and Thou." The pronoun is emphatic. Cf. 1 K. viii. 32, 34, 36, 39, for a similar use of the personal pronoun with the copula. It is not improbable, however, that the existing arrangement of the text is faulty, and that the clause, "when my spirit was overwhelmed," &c., belongs to the preceding verse. In this case the copula may be rendered by "but," instead of "then." As in the first verse the Psalmist finds his refuge only in Jehovah, so in this verse he finds his comfort in the conviction that whilst exposed to dangers, seen and unseen, Jehovah was intimately acquainted with them all, and that His watchful eye was ever upon him for good.

wherein I walked] Rather, "wherein or along which I walk," or "must walk." Cf. Ps. cxliii. 8.

privily laid] Or, "hidden."

laid a snare] Cf. Pss. cxl. 5, cxli. 9.

4. *I looked on my right hand*, &c.] Rather, "Look on the right hand and see." Cf. Job xxxv. 5; Lam. v. 1. The meaning seems to be that the enemies of the Psalmist were so many, and that their snares beset his path so thickly, that even God's all-seeing eye could discern no available human succour, and no way of escape provided for him. The right side is the side of defence (Pss. xvi. 8, cix. 31, cx. 5, cxxi. 5), as also of attack (Ps. cix. 6).

there was no man that would know me] Literally, "there is to (or for) me none acknowledging," *i.e.* none willing to recognize me, or treat me with kindness. Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 11; also Jer. xxiv. 5, where God is said to "acknowledge" the captive Jews; and Ruth ii. 10, 19, where the reference is to the kindly recognition of Ruth by Boaz.

refuge failed me] Literally, "has perished from me." Cf. Job xi. 20; Ps. lix. 16.

no man cared for my soul] Lit. "there is no one seeking (or inquiring for) my soul," *i.e.* with a view to my good. Cf. Jer. xxx. 17, "This is Zion, whom no man *seeketh after.*"

beheld, but *there was* no man that would know me: refuge †failed me; †no man cared for my soul.

† Heb. *perished from me.*
† Heb. *no man sought after my soul.*

5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my refuge *and* my portion in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

Perhaps also Ezek. xiv. 7 may mean "to inquire of Me for his own benefit." Cf. Gen. ix. 5; Ezek. xiv. 3, xx. 3, 31, xxxvi. 37.

5. *Thou art my refuge*] Cf. 1 S. xxiv. 15; Ps. xci. 2, 9; 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.

my portion] Cf. Ps. xvi. 5.

in the land of the living] Cf. Ps. xxvii. 13, and note in loc.; also Job xxviii. 13; and Isai. xxxviii. 11, where the phrase occurs in the same form as here.

6. Compare with the first clause of this verse Pss. xvii. 1, lxxix. 8; and with the second clause Pss. vii. 2, xviii. 17, xxxi. 15, xxxv. 3.

my cry] Generally a cry of joy; here, earnest supplication, as 1 K. viii. 28; Ps. xvii. 1 (where see note). and Ps. lxi. 1. Cf. also Lam. ii. 19, where the verb occurs in the sense of crying out in sorrow.

7. *out of prison*] The precisely parallel passage, Isai. xlii. 7, leaves little doubt that the word here rendered "prison" is rightly translated, although it occurs in no other passage in the psalter, and bears a different meaning in other places of the Old Test. Cf. Isai. xxiv. 22. The title of the psalm affords a probable clue to the use of the word in this place. Saul uses the verb from which this word is derived with reference to the transaction recorded in 1 S. xxiv., when the Lord "delivered" (lit. "shut up") him into the hand of David in the cave of Engedi, *v.* 18, and David would not kill him. See introduction to this psalm.

the righteous shall compass me about] The words here rendered "compass me about" are, probably, rightly so translated. The words may mean, however, "on my account the righteous shall adorn themselves with crowns" (*i.e.* shall rejoice on my account), or "shall crown themselves with me," *i.e.* shall make me their crown of glory; so Jer., "in me coronabuntur justi." Delitzsch compares 1 Cor. xii. 26. The construction is peculiar, and the precise meaning uncertain. LXX. ἐμὲ ὑπομενοῦσι δίκαιοι. Aq. ἐμὲ περιμενοῦσι δίκαιοι. Vulg. "me expectant justi." See Note below.

thou shalt deal bountifully with me] An echo of Ps. xiii. 6.

The close of the psalm, in a manner characteristic of the psalms of David (*e.g.* xiii. 6, xl. 16, 17; cf. xxii. 22, 23, lviii. 10, 11, lxiv. 10, cxl. 13), and especially those of the time of his persecution at the hands of Saul, expresses the writer's confident expectation of eventual deliverance from his foes, and herein (whether designedly or undesignedly on the part of the Psalmist) we trace a prediction of the eventual triumph of good over evil. The reference to the joyful congratulations of the righteous seems to imply a revelation to the soul of the Psalmist, like that made to Elijah when he seemed to himself to be the only champion for the truth, that God had still reserved a remnant, amidst prevailing iniquity, who were ready to rejoice and to be glad. Cf. Ps. cvii. 42

NOTE on PSALM CXLII. 7.

The verb כתר is used in the Piel in Ps. xxii. 12 in a hostile sense, as also in Judg. xx. 43. In the Hiphil it occurs elsewhere only in Prov. xiv. 18, and Hab. i. 4. In the latter place it is used in a hostile sense: in the former it appears to be used intransitively, and is so rendered in the A.V.; "the prudent are crowned with knowledge:" the verb being supposed to derive its signification from כתר corona, "utpote quod caput cingit."

PSALM CXLIII.

1 *David prayeth for favour in judgment.* 3 *He complaineth of his griefs.* 5 *He strengtheneth his faith by meditation and prayer.* 7 *He prayeth for grace,* 9 *for deliverance,* 10 *for sanctification,* 12 *for destruction of his enemies.*

A Psalm of David.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, *and* in thy righteousness.

PSALM CXLIII.

This is the last of the seven Penitential Psalms. The inscription in the Hebrew assigns it to David, and in some copies of the LXX. the words are added, "when Absalom his son pursued him." If it did not proceed

2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for [a]in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

7 Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, [1]lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the

[a] ...1. 34. ...3. 20. ...16.

[1] Or, *for I am become like*, &c.

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directly from the hand of David, it is, as it has been well described, "an extract of the most precious balsam from the old Davidic songs." The general character and phraseology of the psalm favour the supposition of its later date. It is closely connected with the preceding psalms by its subject, and partially by its phraseology. (See notes on *vv.* 4, 8, 11.) If regarded as a late psalm it bears witness to the manner in which, from the time of the exile downwards, the Davidic psalms have been the spiritual treasury of the Church. The division of the psalm into two equal parts, each consisting of six verses, is marked by the *Selah* at the end of *v.* 6, the use of which, though ordinarily a mark of antiquity, can scarcely be so regarded in the case of a psalm which, if not composed by David, is clearly based upon the model of the Davidic psalms.

1. *in thy faithfulness answer me*, &c.] The Psalmist pleads not only God's faithfulness to His promises, *i.e.* His essential and eternal truth, but also His justice and His righteousness; for He is not only faithful but also just to forgive the sins of His people (1 John i. 9). The word "and" is not in the Hebrew. "In Thy faithfulness answer me, in (*i.e.* even in, or in accordance with) Thy justice (or righteousness)."

2. *And enter not*, &c.] It is clear from this verse that it is not a legal but an evangelical righteousness on which the Psalmist's plea for mercy is based. If God were to deal with man on the ground of his own merits no flesh should be justified. Cf. Job xiv. 3, xxii. 4.

no man living, &c.] Rather, "for no living creature is just or righteous before Thee." Cf. Job ix. 32. Not only men, but also angels fall short of the standard of God's holiness. "The heavens are not clean in His sight" (Job xv. 15); much less can "he that is born of a woman be righteous" before Him. (Job xv. 14.)

3. *For the enemy*, &c.] A consciousness of guilt and of deserved punishment seems to lie at the root of the Psalmist's prayer, and to prompt his supplication for forgiveness.

he hath smitten] Rather, "trodden or crushed to the earth."

in darkness] The word (which is plural) occurs elsewhere in the psalter only in lxxiv. 20, and lxxxviii. 6. There is a close resemblance between the psalm last quoted and the present.

as those that have been long dead] Rather, "as those that are for ever dead," *i.e.* buried alive for ever. The question of a future life is not involved in the comparison. The same words are found in Lam. iii. 6 with a single transposition. (Cf. Pss. cv. 10, cxii. 6; Jer. xxxi. 9.)

4. *overwhelmed*] See note on Ps. cxlii. 3.

is desolate] "Amazed," "astonied," or "dispirited." The word in the form here used is of rare occurrence, and is not found elsewhere in the psalter. It is used in Isai. lix. 16, lxiii. 5; Eccles. vii. 16, and Daniel viii. 27. Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 3—6, also Lam. iii. 11.

5. Compare Ps. lxxvii. 12, with which this verse very closely corresponds. The only other place in which the verb rendered "muse" occurs in the same form is Isai. liii. 8. The word rendered "complain" in Ps. lxxvii. 3, and "commune" in Ps. lxxvii. 6, is a different form of the same verb.

thy works] Rather, "Thy doing," or "doings." Cf. Ps. xcii. 4 and note. In some MSS. and most versions both this noun and that translated "work" (a different word in the Heb.) are in the plural.

6. *I stretch forth my hands*, &c.] Lit. "I have stretched forth my hands to Thee; my soul, as a parched land, to Thee." The meaning is the same whether we understand a verb before or after the word "soul," *i.e.* whether the Psalmist is represented as lifting up his soul to God, or his soul is represented as thirsting after God.

7. *Hear me speedily*] Or, "Make haste (and) answer me."

lest I be like unto them, &c.] Verbatim from Ps. xxviii. 1.

8. *Cause me to hear*, &c.] Cf. Ps. xc. 14.

in the morning] *i.e.* "early." Cf. Ps. xc. 14.

way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I † flee unto thee to hide me.

† Heb. *hide me with thee.*

10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou *art* my God: thy spirit *is* good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

11 Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I *am* thy servant.

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for in thee do I trust] Or, "have I trusted." Cf. Ps. xxv. 2.

cause me to know the way] Cf. Pss. xxv. 8, cxlii. 3.

I lift up my soul unto thee] Or, "I have lifted." Cf. Ps. xxv. 1.

9. *I flee unto thee to hide me*] The words literally rendered are, "To Thee have I concealed or hidden." Two explanations have been proposed; (1) To Thee have I entrusted or confided my troubles; (2) In Thee have I hidden myself, *i.e.* found a refuge or hiding-place. The latter interpretation is in conformity with the undoubtedly reflective sense of the verb in many passages (cf. Gen. xxxviii. 14; Deut. xxii. 12; Jonah iii. 6) and with the general phraseology of David. LXX. [ὅτι] πρὸς σὲ κατέφυγον. Jer. "a te protectus sum."

10. *thy spirit is good*, &c.] Rather (though in violation of the accentuation), "let Thy good Spirit lead me, &c.," or more literally, "let Thy Spirit, a good (Spirit), lead me, &c." (Cf. Gen. xxxvii. 2, xliii. 14; Hag. i. 4, for the omission of the article after nouns with pronom. suffixes.) Cf. also Neh. ix. 20, where the art. is prefixed to the adj.

the land of uprightness] Literally, "the land of a level region, or plain;" or, as the same words are rendered in Deut. iv. 43, and Jer. xlviii. 21, "the plain country." The allusion seems to be to the land on the east of the Jordan, which was inhabited by the Reubenites, as being well adapted for the support of their flocks. The district known by this name had been one of great interest and importance to the Israelites. See Ritter's 'Palestine,' Vol. II. p. 153. Figuratively, the word denotes "equity," or "righteousness." Cf. Ps. xxvii. 11 and note in loc.; also Isai. xxvi. 7, 10. See Note below.

11, 12. *Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake*] The phraseology is that of the earlier psalms. Cf. lxxi. 20, xxv. 11; also cxlii. 7.

for thy righteousness' sake] It is worthy of observation that the Psalmist pleads God's righteousness as the foundation on which he bases his supplication for the deliverance of his soul from trouble, and God's lovingkindness or mercy as that on which he grounds his prayer, or his conviction, that God will destroy his enemies. This is not the language of a revengeful and bloodthirsty spirit. Cf. Pss. liv. 7 and xciv. 23. Ps. v. 8 should be compared with *vv.* 10 and 11.

NOTE on PSALM CXLIII. 10.

Some codices have בארח instead of בארץ, *i.e.* in, or "into the path, or way of uprightness."

PSALM CXLIV.

1 *David blesseth God for his mercy both to him and to man.* 5 *He prayeth that God would powerfully deliver him from his enemies.* 9 *He promiseth to praise God.* 11 *He prayeth for the happy state of the kingdom.*

A Psalm of David.

BLESSED *be* the LORD † my strength, *a* which teacheth my hands † to war, *and* my fingers to fight:

2 *b* ‖ My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my

† Heb. *my rock.* a 2 Sam. 22. 35. † Heb. *to the war, &c.* b 2 Sam. 22. 2, 3, 40. ‖ Or, *My mercy.*

PSALM CXLIV.

This psalm bears as its inscription, "To, or of, David." It is manifestly the production of one who was the generally recognized ruler of the nation. It refers, moreover, to a time of danger from foreign foes (*vv.* 6, 7, 11), and perhaps also to present or past rebellion on the part of the Psalmist's own subjects. (See Note on *v.* 2 at end.) The LXX. add πρὸς τὸν Γολιάθ, and the Targumist refers the "evil sword" of *v.* 10 to the sword of Goliath, but the internal evidence is decisive against this supposition. The former part of the psalm is based upon the earlier psalms, and in particular upon the 18th, which was composed long after the event to which the inscription of the LXX. refers this ps. (See int. to that psalm.) It might naturally close with the refrain of *v.* 11, and there seems no necessary connection between the two parts. The latter part has not the

shield, and *he* in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.

[c] Job 7. 17. Ps. 8. 4. Hebr. 2. 6.

3 [c]LORD, what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

4 [d]Man is like to vanity: his days *are* as a shadow that passeth away.

[d] Job 14. 2. Ps. 39. 5.

5 Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

6 [e]Cast forth lightning, and scatter

[e] Ps. 18. 13, 14.

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allusions to earlier psalms which abound in the former. There is more vigour and originality in it. It abounds in the use of peculiar words, and it bears no direct traces of having proceeded from the same writer. At the same time the connection is not so forced as some have represented it, if we suppose the Psalmist, whether David himself, or one of his posterity and successors, to have banished from his memory the past, and to be indulging only bright anticipations of the future. These would naturally find their expression in fresh and terse diction, unalloyed by those allusions to scenes of past trial and difficulty which, as naturally, recalled to the writer either his own personal recollections, or David's description of similar circumstances.

The psalm, in its mingled tones of prayer and praise, is a fit connecting link between the supplicatory psalms which go before, and the strains of thanksgiving which follow it.

1. *my strength*] Lit. "my rock." Cf. Ps. xviii. 2, 46, where the same Hebrew word is rendered "strength" in the former verse and "rock" in the latter.

which teacheth my hands to war, &c.] Rather, "Who instructeth my hands for battle (cf. Pss. lv. 21, lxxviii. 9), my fingers for war" (cf. Ps. xviii. 34). The first two verses of this ps. are a direct echo of David's great song of thanksgiving as recorded in Ps. xviii. (see notes on that ps.), and 2 S. xxii. Five of the descriptive terms which occur in *v.* 2 are taken from Ps. xviii. 2.

2. *My goodness*] Rather, "My lovingkindness or mercy," an abbreviated form, apparently, of "the God of my mercy." Cf. Ps. lix. 10, 17; also Jonah ii. 8.

my deliverer] Lit. "my deliverer for me," as in 2 S. xxii. 2.

I trust] Or, "have taken refuge."

who subdueth my people under me] Cf. Ps. xviii. 47, 48, where, however, we read "peoples" instead of "my people." (See Note at end.) The only other place where the verb rendered "subdueth" occurs in this form, or in this signification, is Isai. xlv. 1, "to subdue nations before him." If the reading "my people" be retained, the word "subdueth" would naturally refer to the quelling of rebellion, as in the case of Absalom, not to the exercise of despotic power. Delitzsch, who thinks the psalm, though composed at a later period, designed to express the feelings with which David, who had already been anointed by Samuel, entered upon the conflict with Goliath, considers the reference to be prospective, *i.e.* to David's hope and conviction that Jehovah would constrain the people to accept him as their king.

3. *LORD, what is man*, &c.] This is an evident echo of Ps. viii. 4.

or the son of man] Rather, "the son of frail or mortal man."

4. *Man is like to vanity*, &c.] Cf. Pss. xxxix. 5, 6, lxii. 9, for the first clause of this verse, and Job viii. 9, xiv. 2; Pss. cii. 11, cix. 23, for the second.

5. *Bow thy heavens*, &c.] The broken thread is here resumed, and the order of Ps. xviii. is continued, but that which is recorded historically in Ps. xviii. is here the subject of the Psalmist's prayer. The connection of the interpolated strophe, *vv.* 3, 4, with the preceding and the following may be as follows. Whereas in Ps. xviii. the Psalmist describes the greatness of his sorrow, and records his invocation of Jehovah in his distress, here, in the form of an exclamation, he expresses his conviction of the utter insignificance and unworthiness of man, and of the wondrous condescension of God in deigning to interpose in his behalf. Dr Kay refers by way of illustration to 2 S. vii. 16 and 18, as presenting a similar contrast.

touch the mountains, &c.] Taken from Ps. civ. 32. As the latent fire needs but the divine summons to evoke it into action, so the wicked have within themselves the elements of misery, which await only a signal from above to be brought into full operation. The primary allusion is evidently to the Theophany on Mount Sinai. Cf. Exod. xix. 18, xx. 18. The mountains here are clearly the hostile powers. Cf. Pss. lxviii. 16, lxxvi. 4.

6. *Cast forth lightning*] Lit. "Lighten lightning." The verb is found in no other place.

scatter them...destroy them] The reference is clearly to the Psalmist's enemies who are mentioned in Ps. xviii. 3, but whose existence is here only implied. A comparison of this verse with Psalm xviii. 14 affords a good illustration of one of the forms of parallelism which distinguish Hebrew poetry. In the passage cited it is the arrows which "scatter" the enemy and the lightning which "discomfits" them (the same word which is here ren-

them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.

7 Send thine †hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children;

† Heb. *hands.*

8 Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood.

9 I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

10 *It is he* that giveth ‖salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

‖ Or, *victory.*

11 Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood:

12 That our sons *may be* as plants grown up in their youth; *that* our

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dered *destroy*). In this psalm it is the lightning which "scatters" them, and the arrows which "destroy" them.

7. *Send thine hand from above*] Rather, "Put out, or stretch forth, Thine hand." The idea is taken from Ps. xviii. 16, "He sent from above," as it is also in the prayer for deliverance from the great waters. The verb here used with reference to the great waters is used in *v.* 11 with reference to the aliens, as in Ps. xviii. 17 with reference to the Psalmist's "strong enemy," and those who "hated" him; thus affording a key to the interpretation of the meaning of the "great" or many "waters." What is there related historically is still, in this place, the subject of supplication.

The word rendered in this verse and *v.* 11 "rid," and in *v.* 10 "deliver," as in its Aramaic signification, is elsewhere used in the sense of opening wide, always in conjunction with *peh* (the mouth), except in Ps. lxvi. 14, where it occurs with *saphah* (the lip). Cf. Ps. xxii. 13; Gen. iv. 11; Isai. x. 14, &c.

strange children] Rather, "sons of a strange land," *i.e.* heathen.

8. *Whose mouth speaketh vanity*] Cf. Pss. xii. 2, xli. 6.

their right hand is a right hand of falsehood] A phrase peculiar to this place. Elsewhere, a tongue or lips of falsehood. Cf. Pss. xxxi. 18, cix. 2. The allusion is to the lifting up of the right hand in an oath or solemn asseveration, as in Gen. xiv. 22; Deut. xxxii. 40; Ps. cvi. 26; Isai. lxii. 8. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 10, "their right hand is full of bribes." The nearest parallel seems to be Isai. xliv. 20: "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Cf. Θεοῖσι πρῶτα δεξιώσομαι, Æsch. 'Agam.' 852.

9. *I will sing a new song*] The Psalmist's expectation of a favourable answer to his prayer is so confident that he utters unconditionally a vow of thanksgiving. See note on Ps. xxxiii. 3.

O God] The only place in Books IV. and V., with the exception of the composite Ps. cviii., in which God is addressed as *Elohim*, without the pronominal suffix. In Book IV. *Elohim* occurs once as a predicate of Jehovah, as the true God (c. 3). In other places it is used of created beings in the last two books.

an instrument of ten strings] See note on Ps. xxxiii. 2.

will I sing praises] Or, "will I play unto Thee." But here, as elsewhere, the vocal accompaniment is clearly implied.

10. *It is he that giveth*] Lit., "Who giveth." There is a change of person. The construction is characteristic of Ps. xviii., in which, as here, sentences are connected by a participle agreeing with a preceding noun. Cf. *vv.* 33, 34 of that psalm.

unto kings] Lit. "unto the kings," *i.e.* the royal house of David, as distinguished from other "kings of the earth" (Ps. cxlviii. 11). Even they have no saving power of their own (cf. Ps. cxlvi. 3). It is God Who gives it to them.

who delivereth David his servant] This corresponds with Ps. xviii. 50. It might seem to imply the Davidic origin of the psalm, as identifying David with the supplicant of *vv.* 7 and 11; but the present participle may here be understood retrospectively, as in Ps. xviii. 50 it is used prospectively; or *David* may here stand for David and his seed (cf. Ps. xviii. 50), as, in Ps. cxlvii. 19, *Jacob* is used to denote his descendants. (See Note at end.) It should be observed that the word rendered "delivereth" in this verse, and "rid" in *vv.* 7 (see note) and 11, is here again used in quite a different signification from that which it bears in Pss. xxii. 13 and lxvi. 14.

the hurtful sword] Lit. "the sword of evil." The allusion may be to the destructiveness of the sword, or it may be to the badness of the cause in which the sword from which the Psalmist prays for deliverance was drawn.

11. *Rid me, and deliver me*] *i.e.* Probably, "As Thou didst deliver David Thy servant, so now also rid and deliver me." The refrain of this verse, taken from *vv.* 7 and 8, seems to form a suitable termination to the psalm. The remaining portion is involved in great obscurity and difficulty.

12. *That our sons may be*] Or, "Whose

daughters *may be* as corner stones, †polished *after* the similitude of a palace:

13 *That* our garners *may be* full, affording †all manner of store: *that* our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:

14 *That* our oxen *may be* †strong to labour; *that there be* no breaking in, nor going out; that *there be* no complaining in our streets.

15 *f*Happy *is that* people, that is in such a case: *yea*, happy *is that* people, whose God *is* the LORD.

† Heb. *kind to kind.*

† Heb. *able to bear burdens*, or, *loaden with flesh.*

f Ps. 33. 12. & 65. 4.

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sons are," &c., in which case *v.* 15 supplies the correlative clause. (So Ewald.) The construction is peculiar and may have been suggested by *v.* 8. LXX. ὧν οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτῶν. Jer. "ut sint filii nostri." (See Note at end.)

grown up] Rather, "wellgrown," or "grown large in their youth;" so Dr Kay. Cf. Isai. i. 2, xxiii. 4; Hos. ix. 12. The word occurs in the same form only in this place. The sons are aptly compared to plants or trees, which flourish in the open air, whilst the daughters are compared to sculptured pillars, which impart grace as well as strength to the interior of a building.

corner stones] Rather, "corner pillars," or "columns." Cf. κερατοειδεῖς γώνιαι, Jos. 'B. J.' v. 5, 6. Cf. also Zech. ix. 15, the only other place where the word occurs.

polished] Rather, "cut" or "sculptured." The word is elsewhere invariably used of wood (with the exception of Prov. vii. 16, where it is used of yarn), and not of stone. The use of male and female figures to support porticos or entablatures seems to be of more modern origin.

after the similitude of a palace] Perhaps "according to the model (or pattern) of the temple." The Prayer-Book Version has "the polished corners of the temple." The temple was the great architectural model of the Hebrews. LXX. ὡς ὁμοίωμα ναοῦ. Jer. "ad similitudinem templi." Cf. Amos viii. 3, and Isai. xliv. 28, for the omission of the article. Cf. 1 K. vii. 21 for the account of the pillars Jachin and Boaz set up by king Solomon in the porch of the temple.

13. *That our garners*, &c.] Lit. "Our garners full," *i.e.* if the construction of *v.* 12 be continued, "whose garners are full."

affording all manner of store] Lit. "giving," or "pouring forth abundantly from kind to kind," *i.e.* all descriptions of produce. The word occurs in the psalter only in this place and Ps. cxl. 9.

that our sheep, &c.] More lit. "our sheep bringing forth thousands, multiplied by myriads."

in our streets] Rather, "in our fields or open pastures" (see note on Job v. 10).

14. *That our oxen may be strong*] The meaning is doubtful. It may be, "our oxen laden with produce," or "our kine fruitful." or "our chiefs (or heads of families) firmly established." (See Note at end.)

that there be no breaking in, &c.] Rather, "no breach," *i.e.* through hostile assault, "and no going out," *i.e.* into captivity. The word rendered "breaking in" occurs in the psalter elsewhere only in Ps. cvi. 23. Cf. Jer. xxix. 16; Amos iv. 3: "And ye shall go out (*i.e.* probably into captivity) through rents or breaches in the wall," where forms of the same words which are here rendered "breaking in" and "going out" are employed.

that there be no complaining, &c.] Rather, "and no cry of sorrow (cf. Isai. xxiv. 11; Jer. xiv. 2, xlvi. 12) in our open places." *i.e.* the places where the people commonly assembled near the gate of the city (cf. 2 Chro. xxxii. 6; Neh. viii. 1). The word rendered "complaining" does not occur elsewhere in the psalter.

15. *Happy is that people*, &c.] Rather, "Blessed is the people," &c. This seems to be the correlative clause to *v.* 12. It is possible, owing to the close correspondence of the initial words of the two verses in the Hebrew, that the two words which begin this verse may have dropped out of the beginning of *v.* 12. (See Note at end.)

NOTES on PSALM CXLIV. 2, 10, 12, 14, 15.

2. The Masora notes this as one of three places in which the singular form of this noun (עמי) stands where we should expect the plural. (The two other places are 2 S. xxii. 44, and Lam. iii. 14.) The Targum, Syriac, and Jerome, as well as many MSS., read the word in the plural.

10. The orthography of the name *David* is the same as in other psalms דוד, not as in the books of Chronicles and other late books דויד.

12. The rendering of אשר in the sense of *in order that* is supported by Deut. iv. 40, where the same word is used in its ordinary sense as a rel. pron. in the same verse, and where למען follows in the signification of *in order that;* cf. Gen. xi. 7; 1 K. xxii. 16; but in all these cases it is followed by the finite verb and not by the

part. Or אשר may mean *for*, as Deut. iii. 24; and the verses must then be read not as containing a prayer, but a reason for the prayer of the preceding verse. This explanation, however, is unsatisfactory.

14. The word אלופינו, rendered "our oxen," may possibly be an epicene form of אלף and mean *our kine;* or it may refer to the heads of tribes or families. If it denotes oxen or kine, the part. מסבלים (which agrees with it in gender) would mean *laden with produce*, or *pregnant.* If it denotes heads of tribes or families, the part. should be rendered *set up*, or *firmly established.* Cf. Ezra vi. 3. The verb סבל does not occur in the psalter. The noun is found in Ps. lxxxi. 6 in the sense of *burden.*

15. שׁ, whether an orig. pronom. stem, or an abbrev. for אשר, is found both in early and in later Heb. Cf. Gen. vi. 3; Judg. v. 7, vi. 17; Song of S. i. 7, iii. 3, 4; Eccles. ii. 13, 22, iii. 18; Pss. cxxiv. 8, cxlvi. 3. The abbreviation here is probably on account of the preceding and following אשרי.

PSALM CXLV.

1 *David praiseth God for his fame,* 8 *for his goodness,* 11 *for his kingdom,* 14 *for his providence,* 17 *for his saving mercy.*

David's *Psalm* of praise.

I WILL extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

3 Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; †and his greatness *is* unsearchable.

4 One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous †works.

6 And *men* shall speak of the might

† Heb. *and of his greatness there is no search.*

† Heb. *things, or words.*

PSALM CXLV.

This psalm is the last of the alphabetical psalms. It is the only psalm which bears as its title the word Tehillah (praise), a title taken probably from the last verse, and answering antithetically to Tephillah, "prayer," cxlii. 1, and from which the whole of the psalter derives its name, Tillim or Tehillim. (See Introd.) It is said to have been the ancient Church's psalm for the mid-day meal (see Armknecht, 'Die Heilige Psalmodie,' s. 54), and St Chrysostom says that *v.* 15 was used at the Holy Communion.

This psalm, which has been described as "the new song" promised in Ps. cxliv. 9, consists of 21 distichs, in alphabetical order, the distich of the letter *nun* alone being deficient, for which deficiency no satisfactory reason can be assigned. The LXX. supply the missing verse by the insertion of *v.* 17, with two slight alterations. They appear to have read thus: נאמן יהוה בכל־דבריו וחסיד בכל־מעשיו. Πιστὸς Κύριος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὅσιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ. The latter of these clauses is borrowed from *v.* 17. The distich is not inserted by Aquila or Theodotion, nor was it found in the Heb. text of Origen or of Jerome. It is rejected by the Chaldee Version and by the Jewish interpreters generally.

The name of David is given in the title as the author, as it is to four of the other alphabetical psalms. The subject of the psalm is well described in its title. It is a magnificent ode of praise to the all-powerful and all-merciful Creator, Whose providential care over all the creatures of His hands is as minute as His dominion is universal and His kingdom everlasting.

1. *O king*] Or, "the king." If David, or one of his posterity, wrote this psalm, there is special force and propriety in the appellation, "the king." Cf. Ps. xcviii. 6. In this case, the Psalmist transfers to the Heavenly King the honour paid to himself as the earthly.

for ever and ever] This verse recals Pss. xxx. 1 and xxxiv. 1. See the general Introduction on the import of this and similar intimations of immortality.

3. *Great is the LORD*, &c.] The first clause of this verse is taken verbatim from Ps. xlviii. 1. Cf. Ps. xviii. 3.

and his greatness, &c.] Rather, "and of His greatness there is no searching out." Cf. Job xi. 7; Isai. xl. 28.

4. *One generation shall praise*, &c.] Lit. "Generation to generation shall praise," or "praises," &c. Cf. Ps. xix. 2.

5. *I will speak*, &c.] Lit. "The splendour of the glory of Thy majesty (cf. *v.* 12, "the glory of the splendour of"), and the words (cf. Ps. lxv. 3, and the title of the books of Chronicles, *words, i.e. histories of the days*) of Thy wonders will I meditate upon" (or "rehearse in poetry," as De Wette).

6. *the might*] This noun occurs only in

of thy terrible acts: and I will [†]declare thy greatness.

† Heb. *declare it.*

7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

8 [a]The LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and [†]of great mercy.

a Exod. 34. 6, 7. Numb. 14. 18. Ps. 86. 5, 15. & 103. 8.
† Heb. *great in mercy.*

9 The LORD *is* good to all: and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

10 All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

13 Thy kingdom *is* [†]an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

† Heb. *a kingdom of all ages.*

14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all *those that be* bowed down.

15 The eyes of all [‖]wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

‖ Or, *look unto thee.*

16 Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17 The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and [‖]holy in all his works.

‖ Or, *merciful*, or, *bountiful.*

18 The LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Ps. lxxviii. 4 and Isai. xlii. 25. In the former case there is a close resemblance in subject and phraseology to this passage.

and I will declare thy greatness] Rather, "and as to Thy mighty works I will declare" or "rehearse it," *i.e.* each of them. See Note at end.

7. *They shall abundantly utter*, &c.] Lit. "pour forth" (as from a fountain). Cf. Pss. xix. 2, lix. 7. As in Ps. lxxviii., the theme of the Psalmist is not only the majesty but also the mercy of the Lord.

and shall sing] Rather, "sing aloud" or "joyfully of."

8. *of great mercy*] Rather, "great in mercy" or "lovingkindness." The verse is taken almost verbatim from Ps. ciii. 8. Cf. Ps. lxxxvi. 15.

9. *all his works*] Cf. Ps. ciii. 22.

10. *thy saints*] Or, "beloved ones." See note on Ps. xvi. 10.

12. *mighty acts*] Rather, "acts of power," as compared with "power" in *v.* 11.

13. *an everlasting kingdom*] Lit. "a kingdom of all ages." LXX. βασιλεία πάντων τῶν αἰώνων. The word עולם = αἰών appears to be here used in its most comprehensive sense, as looking back to all eternity (cf. Ps. lxxvii. 5), and looking forward to all futurity (cf. Ps. lxxvii. 7).

throughout all generations] Lit. "in every generation and generation." This phrase is probably taken from Ps. xlv. 17. Cf. Ps. xc. 1. The resemblance between this verse and Dan. iv. 3, 34 is still closer. It by no means follows, however, that the psalm is of Maccabean date, or that the Hebrew of the Psalmist is borrowed from the Chaldee of Daniel. The facts of the case point to the opposite inference.

14. *all that fall*] Lit. "all the falling (ones)." Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 24, where also the two verbs here rendered "upholdeth" and "fall" are found. The minuteness of God's providential care is here represented as co-extensive with the universality of His dominion. It is not unworthy of observation that the invention of the microscope was almost contemporaneous with that of the telescope. The one, as has been observed by Chalmers in the third of his 'Astronomical Discourses,' revealed "a system in every star;" the other, "a world in every atom."

raiseth up, &c.] The word rendered "raiseth up" occurs only here and in Ps. cxlvi. 8, where, as here, it is found in conjunction with the word which is rendered "bowed down;" a word which occurs only in three other places throughout the Old Testament.

15. *wait upon thee*] Or, "look expectantly to Thee." The verb occurs in the psalter only in Pss. civ. 27, cxix. 116, 166, and cxlvi. 5.

thou givest] The personal pronoun and the part. are here used, "Thou (art) giving."

in due season] Lit. "in its season." This and the following verse correspond with Ps. civ. 27, 28.

16. *Thou openest*, &c.] Lit. "Opening...and satisfying (or supplying) to every living thing (its) desire." Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 23; also *v.* 19 of this psalm. Cf. also Acts xiv. 17.

17. *and holy*] Rather, "merciful." See note on Ps. xvi. 10. The word is used as an

20 The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

attributive of God only here and in Jer. iii. 12, where the A. V. has "merciful."

19. *He will fulfil*, &c.] Or, "He fulfils... He hears...and He saves them."

20. *all the wicked will he destroy*] Or, "He destroys." The verb rendered "destroy" occurs in the psalter in the same form only in Ps. cvi. 23, 34. It must not be overlooked that this declaration occurs in a song of praise. The whole of the context is utterly inconsistent with the expression of emotions of anger or revenge.

21. *My mouth shall speak*] The verbs rendered "speak" and "bless" in this verse may be rendered, in both cases, either by the imperative, or by the future, which have the same form in the third person.

his holy name] This phrase occurs three times in other parts of the psalter, viz. in Pss. xxxiii. 21, ciii. 1, cv. 3.

for ever and ever] Cf. *v.* 1.

NOTE on PSALM CXLV. 6.

The Chethib וגדלותיך is probably the true reading. So Aquila, *καὶ μεγαλωσύνας σου διηγήσομαι αὐτάς*, and Jerome, "et magnitudines tuas narrabunt." The parallelism is also in favour of this reading. Cf. *v.* 12, גבורתיו, with גבורתך, *v.* 11.—The Keri, which is followed by the LXX., *καὶ τὴν μεγαλωσύνην σου διηγήσονται*, the Vulg., "et magnitudinem tuam narrabunt," and the A.V., has the singular וגדולתך. The singular pronom. suffix (אספרנה) with reference to a pl. noun occurs in 2 S. xxii. 23; 2 K. iii. 3, and elsewhere.

PSALM CXLVI.

1 *The psalmist voweth perpetual praises to God.* 3 *He exhorteth not to trust in man.* 5 *God, for his power, justice, mercy, and kingdom, is only worthy to be trusted.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.

2 While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

PSALM CXLVI.

The psalter, in harmony with its general title, Tehillim, *i.e.* Songs of Praise, ends with five Hallelujah psalms, so called from their beginning and ending with Hallelujah. This group of psalms, of which the cxlvith is the first, has been improperly designated the Greek Hallel, in contradistinction from that earlier group of psalms (cxiii.—cxviii.) which is known as the Egyptian Hallel; and it formed a part of the Jewish daily form of Morning Prayer.

The inscription of the LXX., which ascribes this and the two following psalms to Haggai and Zechariah, is so far consistent with the internal evidence that they both bear witness to a date of composition subsequent to the exile. The psalm, which was probably written by one who had himself been a stranger in a strange land (see note on *v.* 9), is an earnest exhortation, from one who had experienced the frailty and instability of man, to trust in the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth, Whose faithfulness is as great as His power, and Whose tender mercies, whilst they are over all His works, are more especially displayed on behalf of those who have no earthly helper.

The points of connection, both of thought and expression, with the preceding psalm are numerous, and seem to point to an identity of authorship. Amongst these the following deserve notice:

(1) "I will praise the LORD," *v.* 2, compared with cxlv. 2.

(2) "whose hope" (שברו), *v.* 5, compared with cxlv. 15, where the cognate verb is used. It should be observed that the only other places in the psalter, in which either the noun or verb occurs, are Pss. civ. 27 and cxix. 116, 166.

(3) "which giveth food," *v.* 7, compared with cxlv. 15.

(4) "the LORD raiseth (זקף) them that are bowed down" (כפופים), *v.* 8, compared with cxlv. 14. The former of these words, which is of common occurrence in Aramaic (cf. Ezra vi. 11), is not found in the Hebrew portions of the Old Testament, except in these two places. The latter word occurs elsewhere only in Ps. lvii. 6; Isai. lviii. 5; and Micah vi. 6.

(5) "The LORD preserveth the strangers," *v.* 9, compared with cxlv. 14.

(6) "The LORD shall reign for ever" and "unto all generations," *v.* 10, compared with cxlv. 13.

3 [a] Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no [1] help.

4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

5 Happy *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope *is* in the LORD his God:

6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein *is*: which keepeth truth for ever:

7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:

8 The LORD openeth *the eyes of* the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:

9 The LORD preserveth the stran-

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1. *Praise ye the LORD*] Or, "Hallelujah." See note on Ps. cxi. 1.

Praise the LORD, O my soul] As a fit prelude to these psalms of praise the Psalmist attunes his own soul to that work of praise in which he summons all creation to join. Cf. Pss. ciii. 22, civ. 1, 33, 34.

2. *I will sing praises*] Or, "play upon an instrument," as Pss. xxxiii. 2, xcviii. 5, cxlix. 3.

while I have any being] The form of the Hebrew word thus translated is peculiar. It occurs elsewhere only in Ps. civ. 33. The parallelism of the two clauses of the verse is sustained throughout. (See Note at end.)

3. *in princes*] This word is used as well of domestic as of foreign rulers. Cf. Num. xxi. 18; Pss. cxiii. 8, cxviii. 9. In any case it is as applicable to Persian as to Grecian rulers, and therefore it cannot indicate the Maccabean date of the psalm. In Ps. cvii. 40 (which is taken from Job xii. 21), where the same word is used, we read, "God poureth contempt upon princes," *i.e.* the rulers of Israel, during the time of the captivity.

in whom] See Note on Ps. cxliv. 15 at end.

4. *he returneth to his earth*] *i.e.* the earth out of which he was originally made (cf. Gen. ii. 7), and unto which he must again return. Cf. Gen. iii. 19; Ps. civ. 29, also 1 Macc. ii. 63, *εἰς τὸν χοῦν αὐτοῦ*, which last passage was probably taken from this psalm. (See Note at end.)

5. *Happy is he*] This is the last of the 25 places (or 26, if Ps. cxxviii. 2 be included) in which the word אשרי, *ashre*, with which the psalter begins, is found.

for his help] Rather, "whose help is the God of Jacob." Cf. Ex. xviii. 4; Ps. xxxv. 2. (Cf. for the Hebrew use of *Beth essentiæ* Gesenius's 'Thesaurus,' pp. 174, 175.)

whose hope] Cf. Jer. xvii. 7, also Ps. xxxiii. 12. (See introd. to this psalm for the use of this word.)

6. *Which made*, &c.] The ground of confidence in God rather than in man is here explained. The phrase is characteristic of the later psalms. It occurs in a slightly varied form (*i.e.* where the part. is in a state of construction) in Pss. cxv. 15, cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8. Cf. Acts iv. 24.

which keepeth truth, &c.] In this clause only the article is prefixed to the participle, probably to denote in a special manner God's faithfulness to His promises.

7. *The LORD looseth the prisoners*] Or, "those that are bound." The allusion is probably to the release from the Babylonian captivity. The same word is used of Jeremiah (xl. 1). This is the first of five clauses, each beginning with the word Jehovah, and, in common with the clauses preceding and following them, each consisting of three words, which is the favourite measure of the lines in the book of Job. In the first and second clauses the participles, rendered "looseth" and "openeth," which properly belong to the chains and to the eyes (which are understood but not expressed in the Hebrew), are made to apply to the persons who are bound, and to those who have lost their sight.

8. *raiseth*] See introd. to this psalm. The several works of mercy enumerated in these verses were combined in the personal ministry of our Lord. He gave food to the hungry, Matt. xiv. 15—21, xv. 32—38. He loosed those that were bound, Luke viii. 29. He opened the eyes of the blind, Matt. ix. 27—31; John ix. 1—8. He raised those that were bowed down, Luke xiii. 11—16.

9. *relieveth*] Rather, **establishes**, or "sets upright." Cf. Ps. xx. 8, where the same verb occurs in another form, and is rendered "stand upright." The form in which it here occurs is found elsewhere only in Ps. cxlvii. 6. The strangers, the widow, and the fatherless, who are combined in this place only in the psalter, are the three special types of the needy and afflicted. The word rendered "strangers," when used in connection with the widow and the fatherless, is commonly in the singular. When it is found, as here, in the plural, and without the article, it is generally used of the Israelites when in a foreign land.

he turneth upside down] Or, "turneth aside." The word occurs very seldom in the Old Testament, and only in one other place in

gers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

10 [b]The LORD shall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

[b] Exod. 15. 18.

the psalter, viz. cxix. 78. It is used four times in Job. It is observed by Delitzsch that whilst the works of God in providence and in grace are enumerated at length, His judicial administration occupies only one line: one of the numerous indications that whilst He "delights in mercy," judgment is His "strange work."

10. *The LORD shall reign*] Or, "Jehovah is King."

Praise ye the LORD] This is the termination as well as the beginning of the whole of this second series of Hallelujah psalms, as of Ps. cxiii. and, with slight variation, of Ps. cxvii. of the former series.

NOTES on PSALM CXLVI. 2, 4.

2. The suffix of the noun differs from the verbal suffix in meaning as well as in form. עוֹדֶנִּי means, "I still am," or, "as yet I am," as in Josh. xiv. 11, and 1 S. xx. 14. So בְּעוֹדֶנִּי, Deut. xxxi. 27, means, "whilst I yet am." In these and similar cases the predicate is either expressed or implied, as *e.g.* "yet alive," "yet strong," &c. עוֹד, on the contrary, with the suffix of the noun, whether regarded as a noun or as an adverb, denotes continuous existence, whether past or future, as in Gen. xlviii. 15; Ps. civ. 33; and in this place.

4. The word rendered "his thoughts" in this verse (עשתנתיו) occurs only here. It comes from an Aramaic root = Heb. חשב. A cognate Aramaic verb occurs in Dan. vi. 3, and a cognate Hebrew form occurs in Job xii. 5. Cf. 1 Macc. ii. 63. It is an indication of the late, though not of the Maccabean, date of the psalm.

PSALM CXLVII.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to praise God for his care of the church,* 4 *his power,* 6 *and his mercy:* 7 *to praise him for his providence:* 12 *to praise him for his blessings upon the kingdom,* 15 *for his power over the meteors,* 19 *and for his ordinances in the church.*

PRAISE ye the LORD: for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; *and* praise is comely.

2 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their †wounds.

4 He telleth the number of the

† Heb. *griefs.*

PSALM CXLVII.

The liturgical character of this psalm is clearly marked. It celebrates God's sovereign rule over His people, and also His wisdom, His power, and His mercy, as displayed in tne works of nature and of providence. This is one of the distinctive characteristics of those psalms which were written subsequently to the captivity, and is probably to be ascribed to the proofs recently given to the Israelites of the vanity of idols and the supreme and all-controlling majesty of Jehovah. More particularly this psalm celebrates the power and goodness of God as displayed in the restoration of the people to their own land, and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. This work was not accomplished without much difficulty and danger (Neh. ii.—iv.). When it was completed the Levites were brought up "out of all their places" to Jerusalem, "to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps." Neh. xii. 27. A comparison of *vv.* 1, 2, 7, and 12 with Neh. xii. 27, 43 suggests the probability that the psalm may have been composed and recited on the occasion there described.

The LXX. divide the psalm into two parts, of which the second begins at *v.* 12.

It seems to have been composed either towards the beginning of the spring, or at the time of harvest.

1. *Praise ye the LORD*, &c.] The A. V. is consistent with the accents, and defensible both grammatically and by the similar use of *tob*, "good," in Ps. xcii. 2. On the other hand, if the Masoretic accentuation be rejected, as it is by Hupfeld and others, the verse may be translated thus: "Praise ye Jehovah; for it is good: sing (or play upon an instrument) to our God, for it is pleasant; praise is comely." Cf. Pss. xxxiii. 1, xcii. 1, cxxxiii. 1; and cxxxv. 3. See Note at end.

2. *doth build up Jerusalem*] Rather, "is the builder up of Jerusalem." The work was probably just completed.

stars; he calleth them all by *their* names.

5 Great *is* our Lord, and of great power: †his understanding *is* infinite.

6 The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

9 [a]He giveth to the beast his food, *and* to the young ravens which cry.

10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

13 For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

14 †He maketh peace *in* thy bor-

[a] Job 38. 41. Ps. 104. 27, 28.

† Heb. *Who maketh thy border peace.*

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gathereth together] The Piel form occurs elsewhere only in Ezek. xxii. 21, xxxix. 28; in the latter of which places there is direct allusion to the return from captivity.

the outcasts] Or, "exiles." Cf. Isai. xi. 12, xvi. 4, xxvii. 13, and lvi. 8; LXX. τὰς διασποράς. This is one of the many indications of the date of composition of this psalm.

3. *the broken in heart*] Cf. Ps. xxxiv. 18, and Isai. lxi. 1.

4. *He telleth the number of the stars*] Or, "He appoints a number to the stars."

5. *his understanding is infinite*] Lit. "to His understanding there is no number." Cf. Ps. cxlv. 3. The phraseology of this and the preceding verse so closely resembles that of Isai. xl. 26—29 that there can be little doubt that the words of the Prophet were in the mind of the Psalmist. The following clauses may be compared: (1) "He appoints a number to the stars," with "That bringeth out their host by number;" (2) "He calleth them all by names," with "He calleth them all by names;" (3) "Great is our Lord and of great power," with "By the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power;" (4) "His understanding is infinite," with "There is no searching of His understanding."

6. *lifteth up the meek*] Or, "setting upright or firm the oppressed." Cf. Ps. cxlvi. 9. The transition from Jehovah's omnipotence and omniscience, as displayed in the works of nature, to His providential care over His people, is similar to that in Ps. cxlv. 13, 14.

7. *Sing*] Lit. "Answer," *i.e.* antiphonally. Cf. Exod. xv. 21 (and note in loc.), xxxii. 18; 1 S. xviii. 7, xxi. 11. In the last two places the words are rendered, "answer one another," and "sing one to another."

8. *who maketh grass to grow*, &c.] Rather, "Who makes the mountains bring forth grass," *i.e.* without man's cultivation. Cf. Ps. civ. 14. The LXX. add at the end of this verse the words, καὶ χλόην τῇ δουλείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

9. *He giveth to the beast his food*, &c.] Cf. Job xxxviii. 41; Pss. civ. 21, 27, 28; cxlv. 15; Joel i. 20. The references to Job throughout this psalm are numerous.

10. *in the strength of the horse*, &c.] Carnal reliance generally is here rebuked. There is probably an allusion to cavalry and infantry, but there seems no direct reference to the prohibition against multiplying horses. Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17; Prov. xxi. 31.

11. *taketh pleasure in them that fear him*] The same word is used here as in the second clause of the preceding verse, but here the government is direct, and the more literal rendering is, "favoureth them that fear Him." Cf. Pss. lxii. 4, cii. 14.

that hope in his mercy] Rather, "that hope, or wait, for His mercy, or lovingkindness." Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 18.

12. *Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem*] This strophe begins a new psalm in the LXX., of which the subject is the peace and prosperity of the city of Jerusalem, which has risen from its ruins, and of the land of Israel, which is summoned to join with the inhabitants of the city in the praise of Jehovah. The verb rendered "praise," or, rather, "praise aloud," is used in the psalter in this form and signification only in Pss. lxiii. 4, cxviii. 1, and cxlv. 4. It occurs also in Ps. lxxxix. 10, but in a different signification.

13. *For he hath strengthened*, &c.] The walls of the city were now rebuilt, and its gates duly closed and barred by night. See Neh. vii. 3.

14. *He maketh peace in thy borders*] Rather, "Who maketh thy border peace." Cf. Isai. lx. 17.

the finest of the wheat] Lit. "the fat of the wheat." The original blessing of peace and

† Heb. *fat of wheat.*

ders, *and* filleth thee with the † finest of the wheat.

15 He sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

16 He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.

17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?

18 He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow.

19 He sheweth † his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

† Heb. *his words.*

20 He hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

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plenty is now renewed. Cf. Deut. xxxii. 13, 14; Ps. lxxxi. 16. As in *v.* 13 allusion is made to the security of the city, so in *v.* 14 allusion is made to the prosperity of the land; both Jerusalem and Zion having been summoned in *v.* 12 to unite in praising the Lord.

15. *He sendeth forth his commandment,* &c.] Rather, "Who sendeth His commandment (to) the earth." Cf. Gen. i. 3; also Pss. xxxiii. 9, cvii. 20, where see note.

16. *He giveth snow like wool*] Rather, "Who giveth snow like wool." The meaning may be either that the snow is like wool as to whiteness (cf. Isai. i. 18); or, that the flakes of snow cover the earth like a woollen garment. Cf. Job xxxvii. 6.

he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes] Cf. Job xxxviii. 29. The paronomasia is lost in the translation.

17. *He casteth forth his ice like morsels*] Rather, "casting forth His hail." The morsels or pieces seem to refer to the hailstones or sleet. Cf. Job xxxvii. 10.

18. *He sendeth out his word*] This is one of the passages in which the Word of Jehovah has been supposed to mean our Lord Jesus Christ. Cf. Pss. xxxiii. 4, cvii. 20, cxix. 89, 105. It seems more probable, however, that "word" here is equivalent to "command," as in *v.* 15. Cf. Ps. cxlviii. 8.

19. *He sheweth his word*] The Keri has, "His words;" those "lively oracles," in the possession of which the Jews had the advantage over all the other nations of the earth. Cf. Rom. iii. 1, 2.

20. *He hath not dealt so*] Cf. Deut. iv. 7, 32—41.

NOTE on PSALM CXLVII. 1.

There is much difficulty in determining the right division of the several clauses of this verse. The analogy of Ps. cxxxv. 3 would lead us to regard טוב as a predicate of Jehovah; but in this case it would seem to follow that נעים must also be so regarded. Whilst, however, נעים does not appear to be used of God, it is used in Ps. cxxxv. 3 in connection with זמרו, and in Ps. cxxxiii. 1 טוב and נעים are found in conjunction. The form of the word זַמְּרָה creates another difficulty. According to the A.V. it must be regarded as the Piel Inf. with ה paragog. It may be taken as the Imp. Piel with ה paragog. (cf. Lev. xxvi. 18), but in this case the transition from the pl. to the sing. is harsh. Hupfeld refers to another reading and accentuation, אזמרה, the Athnach of the following word being transposed to נעים, and he appeals to Ps. cxlv. 6 for the transition of person. He prefers, however, to read זמרו, as in *v.* 7 (cf. Ps. cxxxv. 3).

PSALM CXLVIII.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth the celestial,* 7 *the terrestrial,* 11 *and the rational creatures to praise God.*

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

2 Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that *be* above the heavens.

PSALM CXLVIII.

In this magnificent Anthem, which exhibits in a striking manner the majesty and the wide compass, as well as the nationality, of the Hebrew worship, all creation, both in heaven and on earth, is summoned to unite in the praise of the Creator. The invitation addressed to the inanimate creation to join in

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.

6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:

8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:

9 Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and †flying fowl:

11 Kings of the earth, and all peo-

† Heb. *birds of wing.*

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the universal chorus, is a prophetic anticipation of that day in which the whole of the creation which is now "groaning and travailing in pain together," beneath the influence of the curse, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption and brought into "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. 18. Cf. also Isai. xxxv. 1, 2, xliv. 23, xlix. 13, lii. 9, lv. 12, 13.

The psalm is divided into two nearly equal parts, of which the former (*vv.* 1—6) relates to the heavenly, and the latter (*vv.* 7—12) to the earthly Hallelujah. In both parts the ground of the exhortation to praise is expressed. In the one case it is that, at the word of God, the heavenly hosts were created, and that to His decree they are subject. In the other case it is that the Name of Jehovah alone is highly exalted, and that it has pleased Him to raise up "an horn of salvation" for His people.

Vv. 13, 14 are connected with *vv.* 7—12, as 5, 6 with 1—4.

The points of connection with the preceding and following psalms are numerous. The key-note of the song of praise is struck in Ps. cxlv. 10, and the "works" of Jehovah there mentioned collectively, are here specified separately. *V.* 14, "a people near unto Him," may be compared with cxlvii. 19, 20, and both with cxlvi. 10.

1. *from the heavens*] Or, "of the heavens," *i.e.* "O ye of the heavens!" The call to praise, instead of beginning from the earth and rising to heaven, begins with the higher sphere of creation, and is afterwards extended to our lower world.

2. *all his hosts*] Both the heavenly bodies and the angels are represented in the Old Testament as "the hosts" of the Lord; the former in Deut. iv. 19, the latter in Josh. v. 14; 1 K. xxii. 19, and Job xxxviii. 7. Both may be included under a common designation in this verse, but the parallelism suggests that the angels are here primarily, if not exclusively, contemplated (cf. Pss. xxix. 1, ciii. 20). In *v.* 3 the heavenly bodies are specified.

4. *heavens of heavens*] Cf. Gen. i. 6, where see note; also Deut. x. 14; 1 K. viii. 27; Ps. lxviii. 33 (in all of which cases both words are in the plural number in the Heb.).

5. *he commanded, and they were created*] Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 6. The LXX. interpolate a clause before these words, αὐτὸς εἶπε καὶ ἐγεννήθησαν. So also the Prayer-Book Version.

6. *He hath also stablished them for ever and ever*] Cf. Ps. cxi. 8, which is the only place in which the words rendered "for ever and ever" occur in precisely the same form. A similar expression occurs Isai. xxx. 8.

he hath made a decree which shall not pass] Rather, "He gave them a decree (cf. Job xxviii. 26; Ps. xcix. 7; Jer. xxxi. 35, 36, xxxiii. 25); and not (one) transgresses (it)." Cf. Job xiv. 5; Ps. civ. 9; Jer. v. 22 (where the accus. suffix is added); also Esther i. 19, ix. 27. The verb rendered "pass," when used in connection with bounds or laws, seems to denote their transgression. God has engraven a law on all His works in nature which regulates their mutual relations, and none of them transgresses it. There is authority, however, for the A.V. Thus the LXX., καὶ οὐ παρελεύσεται. Jer., "et non præteribit." Cf. Ps. cxliv. 4.

7. *from the earth*] Or, "(O ye) of the earth!" Cf. *v.* 1. This corresponds to the words in *v.* 1, "from (or, of) the heavens;" and expresses, as implied in the A.V., the place from whence the praise is to proceed.

ye dragons] The word denotes any large water-animals. See note on Gen. i. 21. Cf. Ps. lxxiv. 13.

8. *Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours*] The word rendered "fire" may here denote lightning. Cf. Ex. xix. 18; also Ps. cv. 32, where, as here, it is found in conjunction with "hail." The word rendered "vapour" commonly denotes "smoke" arising from fire, whether kindled in an ordinary manner (Ps. cxix. 83), or by lightning, or by volcanic or any other extraordinary agency. Cf. Gen. xix. 28. The four words are arranged in a somewhat peculiar manner; fire and smoke standing to each other in a reciprocal relation, as also hail and snow. These latter are of comparatively rare occurrence in Palestine.

fulfilling his word] Cf. Ps. ciii. 20.

9. *fruitful trees*] Rather, "fruit trees," as distinguished from trees of the forest, of which the cedar is the representative. Cf. Gen. i. 11.

10. *Beasts, and all cattle*] The former

ple; princes, and all judges of the earth:

12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is †excellent; his glory *is* above the earth and heaven.

† Heb. *exalted.*

14 He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; *even* of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXLIX.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to praise God for his love to the church,* 5 *and for that power which he hath given to the church.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

2 Let Israel rejoice in him that

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of the two words here employed denotes specially wild beasts, the latter domestic cattle.

11. *Kings of the earth,* &c.] As in the invocation to praise Jehovah "from the heavens" the Psalmist begins with the angels, and ends with the waters above the heavens, so, inversely, in the invocation to praise Jehovah "from the earth," the Psalmist begins with the inanimate creation, and ends with man, the noblest of God's works.

13. *above the earth and heaven*] From both of which His praise is to proceed. Cf. Ps. lvii. 5.

14. *He also exalteth the horn of his people*] Or, "And He hath raised (or lifted) up a horn for His people." Cf. Ps. cxxxii. 17; also Luke i. 69. During the period of the captivity Israel had lost its horn or pre-eminence. The A.V., however, is supported by the LXX.; Καὶ ὑψώσει κέρας λαοῦ αὐτοῦ, and by Jer., "et exaltavit cornu populi sui."

the praise of all his saints] These words may be understood grammatically in two ways. They may mean that the Lord Himself is the praise of His people, as in Deut. x. 21; Jer. xvii. 14; or, as seems more probable, they may mean that the restoration of the horn to His people is the occasion of praise, as in this psalm (or, in New Testament language, "for a praise," εἰς ἔπαινον), to all His saints. Cf. Ephes. i. 6, 12, 14; Phil. i. 11, and 1 Pet. i. 7. The latter explanation is in harmony with the construction of Ps. cxlix. 9. The former is supported by the LXX., ὕμνος πᾶσι τοῖς ὁσίοις αὐτοῦ, and by Jer., "laus omnibus sanctis ejus."

a people near unto him] Lit. "the people of His nearness." Cf. Lev. x. 3; Deut. iv. 7. It is in this capacity, as a people brought very near to Jehovah, that Israel, as represented in the person of the Psalmist, strikes the key-note in this psalm of that song of praise in which all creation, animate and inanimate, shall hereafter join.

PSALM CXLIX.

This psalm appears to have been composed by the same writer as the other psalms of this Hallelujah series. Its applicability to the circumstances of the Jews at the time of the restoration is not so obvious as in some other psalms of the same period. It is not unreasonable, however. to suppose that though constrained for a time to act only on the defensive, the restored Israelites may have indulged sanguine expectations of future victories over their heathen adversaries. But whatever the character, or the occasion, of those emotions which inspired the breast of the Psalmist, there can be little doubt that this psalm, like those passages in which mention is made of "a new song" (see note on Ps. xcviii. 1), has reference to the days of the Messiah, and to His final victories over all opposing foes.

When this psalm is compared with the parallel prophecies of Isaiah, and of the Apocalypse, the difficulty which exists in its interpretation will be greatly diminished, if not removed; and its reference will appear to be to those signal judgments, foretold alike in the Old and in the New Testament, which will usher in the coming of the great day of the Lord, when His enemies must perish at His presence, and His "people shall be willing in the day of His power." (Cf. Ps. cx. and also the notes on *vv.* 8, 9 of this psalm.)

1. *a new song*] See notes on Pss. xxxiii. 3, and xcviii. 1. The period of the restoration, an event which stirred the deepest emotions of the nation, was one, though perhaps the least remarkable, of the epochs of the revival of the lyric poetry of the Hebrews.

in the congregation of saints] This is one of the connecting links with the preceding psalm (*v.* 14). The word rendered "saints" occurs three times in this psalm. The harps which had long hung upon the willows of Babylon were once more employed in the liturgical worship of the rebuilt temple.

2. *in him that made him*] The word rendered, in the A.V., "that made him" (lit. "his Makers"), as it stands in the received Hebrew text, is in the plural number, as in Job xxxv. 10, and Isai. liv. 5. It seems to refer rather to the selection and constitution of Israel as the people of Jehovah, than to the act of creation (cf. Isai. xliv. 2, li. 13;

made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his name [‖] in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

‖ Or, *with the pipe.*

4 For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.

5 Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.

6 *Let* the high *praises* of God *be* [†] in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;

† Heb. *in their throat.*

7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people;

8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9 [a] To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

[a] Deut. 7. 1.

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and see note on Ps. c. 3). By the restoration from Babylon, Israel had been appropriated anew in this special character.

in their King] The Theocratic king no longer existed, and the Lord their God had become again their King. Deut. xxxiii. 5; 1 S. xii. 12.

3. *in the dance*] The Hebrew word (*mahol*), if rightly translated (as it seems to be, though some understand it of the pipe or flute), is used specially with reference to the sacred dance. Cf. Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34, xxi. 21; also Jer. xxxi. 4, a prophecy of the restoration, "Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets (the plural of the same noun which is rendered "timbrel" in this verse; cf. Ps. cl. 4, where mention is again made of the *timbrel* in connection with *mahol*), and thou shalt go forth in the dances (sing. in Heb.) of them that make merry." Cf. *v.* 13 of the same chap.; also Ps. xxx. 11 and note. In the prophecy of the restoration from the captivity in Jeremiah xxx. and xxxi., the annunciation of the vengeance which was about to be executed upon the wicked is connected, as in this psalm, with the joy and exultation of Israel. Cf. xxx. 23, 24.

let them sing praises] Rather, "let them play upon an instrument."

4. *For the* LORD *taketh pleasure in his people*] Cf. cxlvii. 11.

he will beautify, &c.] Or, "He beautifies (or makes glorious) the oppressed (or afflicted) with deliverance." The verb occurs in no other place in the psalter. It is chiefly used by Isaiah. Cf. lv. 5, lx. 9.

5. *Let the saints be joyful in glory*] Rather, "with glory," or "because of glory," *i. e.* the glory conferred upon them, or promised to them. Cf. Hag. ii. 9. In the place of "howling upon their beds" (Hos. vii. 14), God now gives to them "songs in the night" (Job xxxv. 10). Cf. Ps. xlii. 8; Isai. xxx. 29. This and the following clauses may be rendered either as in the A.V., or in the present tense thus; "are joyful," "they sing aloud," "the high praises (lit. the exaltations, not used elsewhere, cf. Pss. lxvi. 17, xcix. 5, 9) of God are in their mouth, and a two-edged sword is in their hand." The words rendered "a two-edged sword" may be translated more literally "a sword of mouths," *i. e.* edges. Cf. Neh. iv. 17, "Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon;" also 2 Macc. xv. 27, "So that fighting with their hands, and praying unto God with their hearts, they slew no less than thirty and five thousand men."

7. *upon the heathen*] Rather, "upon," or "amongst, the nations."

upon the people] Rather, "upon," or "amongst, the peoples."

8. *To bind their kings with chains*] Cf. the passages cited in the note on *v.* 9, also Isai. xlix. 7, 23, lx. 3, ff., where the subjugation predicted is moral not physical, and consists in the surrender of idolatry, and the reception of the true faith.

9. *To execute upon them*, &c.] Or, "amongst them." "The judgment (or decree) written" may look back, in the first instance, to the sentence of extermination pronounced on the Canaanites, but it seems to refer, not so much to any one particular passage, as to the immutable decree of God, registered in heaven, and thus "written before Him" (cf. Isai. lxv. 6), and expressed also in the whole of the prophecies, more especially those of Isaiah, which predict the universal dominion of Jehovah, and the complete subjugation of His adversaries, in connection with the glory and exaltation of Israel. Thus *e. g.* in Isai. xlv. 14, captives of different nations are represented as coming over to the restored Jews in chains (the same word as in *v.* 8); in ch. lx. *vv.* 2, 3, the nations with their kings are described as coming to the light of Israel; in *v.* 11, it is foretold that "the forces of the Gentiles," and "their kings," shall be brought within the gates of Jerusalem; whilst in ch. lix. 16—19, the vengeance of *v.* 7 is represented as being executed. With these passages may be

PSALM CL.

1 *An exhortation to praise God*, 3 *with all kind of instruments.*

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

†PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

2 Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

3 Praise him with the sound of the ¹trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.

¹ Or, *cornet.*

4 Praise him with the timbrel and ¹dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

¹ Or, *pipe.*

5 Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

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compared Deut. xxxii. 40—43, and Isai. lxv. 6; also Rev. xiv. 20, xvii. 14.

this honour have all his saints] This clause may be rendered grammatically in either of the following ways: (1) it may mean, "He (the Lord) is a (or the) honour of all His saints;" *i.e.* He, Who at His first coming had "no form nor comeliness" (the same word which is here rendered "honour"), will become the honour of His saints when He shall come again to exalt them, and to take vengeance upon their adversaries; or (2) it may mean, "it is an honour to all His saints;" *i.e.* the destruction of their adversaries, and their own deliverance, will become a crown of glory to the people of the Lord. Cf. cxlviii. 14, and note. The latter interpretation seems to be the true one. "The victories of their King," says Dr Kay, "reflect glory on all His faithful and devoted servants."

PSALM CL.

As each of the five books of the psalter ends with its doxology, so the entire "Book of Praises" ends with this magnificent song of thanksgiving, in which not only the people of Israel with all their national instrumental music, but the whole of the animate creation, "every thing that hath breath," is summoned to unite. See Introduction to the Psalms, sec. 2.

"It was, no doubt," writes Isaac Taylor, "to give effect first to the human voice, and then, to the alternations of instruments—loud, and tender, and gay, with the graceful movements of the dance, that the anthem was composed, and its chorus brought out—

'Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord: Praise ye the Lord!'

and so did the congregated thousands take up their part with a shout—'even as the noise of many waters.'" 'The Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry,' pp. 156, 7.

This universal Hallelujah forms the most suitable conclusion to a book in which cries from the deep are, throughout, blended with songs of praise; in other words, which describes the experience of God's people throughout the whole of the various vicissitudes of their earthly history.

"There is now no need," says Delitzsch in loc., "for any special closing *beracha* (*i.e.* blessing). This whole closing psalm is such. Nor is there any need even of an *Amen* (Ps. cvi. 48; cf. 1 Chro. xvi. 36). The *Hallelujah* includes it within itself and exceeds it."

1. *in his sanctuary*] If the sanctuary here denotes the earthly temple of Jehovah (cf. Ps. xv. 1), this verse may be regarded as a short summary of Ps. cxlviii. If the heavenly sanctuary be denoted, as in Ps. xi. 4, we must consider the summons to praise as addressed to the angelic hosts. The word may, however, be rendered "for," or "on account of, His holiness," as the same preposition is commonly understood in the following verse. Cf. Ps. lx. 6, and note in loc.

in the firmament of his power] *i.e.* where His might and majesty are displayed. Cf. Ps. lxviii. 34, 35.

2. *for his mighty acts*] Or, "in, *i.e.* in the recital of, His mighty acts;" as *e.g.* the Exodus, the Restoration from Babylon, and, finally, the ultimate deliverance foretold in the preceding psalm.

according to his excellent greatness] Rather, "according to the abundance of his greatness."

3. *sound of the trumpet*] Or, "blast of the horn." For the distinction between the construction and use of the ram's horn, and the straight silver trumpet, see note on Num. x. 2.

4. *timbrel and dance*] The timbrel, or tambourine, was the chief instrumental accompaniment of the dance; cf. Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34, also Ps. cxlix. 3. The word rendered "dance" may, however, denote a musical instrument. See Ps. cxlix. 3, and note.

with stringed instruments] See Note at end.

and organs] Rather, "and pipe."

5. *loud cymbals......high sounding cymbals*] Rather, "cymbals of clear sound......cymbals of loud noise." The latter word seems to denote a loud sound as of an alarm or signal trumpet, as in Lev. xxv. 9, and Num. xxxi. 6. Cf. Num. x. 5; and Ps. xcviii. 6, and notes in loc.; also 1 Cor. xiii. 1, κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον.

6. *Let every thing that hath breath*] Lit.

"the whole of breath," *i.e.* all living beings. Cf. Gen. ii. 7; Deut. xx. 16; Josh. x. 40. The last verse of the psalter is a summons addressed no longer to Israel only (as the mention of their national instruments in the preceding verses might seem to imply), but to the whole of the human creation (to which the word here used generally applies), and, it may be, to the whole animate creation, to unite in the praise of Jehovah.

NOTE on PSALM CL. 4.

The meaning of the word מִנִּים rendered "stringed instruments" is doubtful. A corresponding Syriac word ܡܢܝܢܐ is used in Ps. xxxii. 2, as = כנור, and the context suggests that it may denote some specific musical instrument in this place, especially inasmuch as two stringed instruments are mentioned in the preceding verse. Fürst suggests that מִנִּים may be a contracted form derived from נָעַם. Cf. Ps. xlv. 8, where מִנִּי occurs, and note in loc.

EXCURSUS UPON PSALMS XCI.—C.

Frequent reference has been made in the notes on Pss. xci.—c., and more particularly in the notes on Pss. xciii., xcvi., and xcviii., to their mutual connection, and their common dependence upon the prophecies, especially the *later* prophecies, of Isaiah. The indications of mutual connection and common authorship, with regard at least to several of these psalms, are traced mainly in the identity or similarity of the subject-matter, in their adaptation for liturgical use, in the frequent recurrence of the same or similar words and phrases, in the general resemblance of style, in the characteristic use of *anadiplosis* or *iteration*, and in the facts that Ps. xciii. is a part of Ps. xcii. in twelve Codices, that Ps. xcv. is joined to Ps. xciv. in nine Codices, that Ps. xcvi. is a part of Ps. xcv. in four Codices, that Ps. xcvii. is a part of Ps. xcvi. in fourteen Codices, and that Ps. xcix. is united with Ps. xcviii. in eight Codices. The results arising out of this mutual connection, and more particularly out of the common dependence of these psalms upon the prophecies of Isaiah, are of so much interest and importance, that it has been thought desirable to trace out more fully the nature and extent of the coincidences of subject, style, and phraseology between these psalms and the prophecies, both earlier and later, of Isaiah; and to endeavour to ascertain, approximately, the date to which the composition of this series of psalms may be assigned.

The following table of coincidences will suffice to shew that if the psalms and the prophecies were not the compositions of the same writer, the Psalmist must have borrowed from the Prophet, or the Prophet from the Psalmist.

(1)

Psalm xcii. 1, compared with	Isaiah xxiv. 23.
יהוה מלך	כי מלך יהוה צבאות בהר ציון
"Jehovah is King."	"When (or for) Jehovah of Hosts is King (or has begun to reign) in Mount Sion."
The same words which form the key-note of this series of psalms are repeated in Pss. xcvi. 10, xcvii. 1, and xcix. 1, coupled, in the place last quoted, with the declaration that "Jehovah is great in Zion."	And lii. 7, אמר לציון מלך אלהיך, "Say unto Zion, Thy God is King." Cf. xxxii. 1, xxxiii. 17, 22.

(2)

Psalm xciii. 1, compared with	Isaiah li. 9.
לבש יהוה עז התאזר	לבשי עז זרוע יהוה
"Jehovah hath clothed Himself, hath girded Himself, with strength."	"Clothe Thyself with strength, O arm of Jehovah." Cf. lii. 1:— לבשי עזך "Clothe Thyself with Thy strength, O Zion."

(3)

Psalms xcvi. 1, xcviii. 1, compared with	Isaiah xlii. 10.
שירו ליהוה שיר חדש	שירו ליהוה שיר חדש
"Sing unto Jehovah a new song."	"Sing unto Jehovah a new song."

(4)

Ps. xcviii. 7, compared with	Isaiah xlii. 10.
הים ומלאו...תבל וישבי‎ה	הים ומלאו...איים וישביהם
"The sea and its fulness, the earth and the inhabitants thereof."	"The sea and its fulness, the islands and the inhabitants thereof."
Also xcvi. 11, הים ומלאו "The sea and its fulness."	Cf. xxxiv. 1: הארץ ומלאה "The earth and its fulness."

(5)

Psalm xcvi. 11, compared with	Isaiah xlix. 13.
ישמחו השמים ותגל הארץ	רנו שמים וגילי ארץ
"The heavens are glad, and the earth is joyful." Cf. xcvii. 1.	"Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth." Cf. xliv. 23.

(6)

Psalm xcvii. 5, compared with	Isaiah xxxiv. 3.
הרים...נמסו	נמסו הרים
"The mountains are melted."	"The mountains are melted."

(7)

Psalm xcviii. 1, compared with	Isaiah lii. 10.
זרוע קדשו	זרוע קדשו
"His holy arm."	"His holy arm."

This phrase occurs in no other place.

(8)

Psalm xcviii. 3, compared with	Isaiah lii. 10.
ראו כל אפסי ארץ את ישועת אלהינו	וראו כל אפסי ארץ את ישועת אלהינו
"All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."	"And all the ends of the earth shall see (or have seen) the salvation of our God."

(9)

Psalm xcviii. 4, compared with	Isaiah lii. 9.
פצחו ורננו	פצחו רננו
"Break forth into a shout and sing."	"Break forth into a shout, sing."

It should be observed here that the verb פצח in the sense of "break out into a shout" or "cry of joy" (*e.g.* Isai. liv. 1, where the LXX. has *ῥῆξον καὶ βόησον*, cf. Gal. iv. 27), is absolutely peculiar to the prophet Isaiah (who uses it six times in his earlier and later prophecies in this sense), and to the Psalmist in this place; and that the verb is invariably used by the Prophet, as it is here by the Psalmist, in conjunction with the verb רנן, or its cognate noun רנה. The word itself occurs, but in a different form and signification, in one other place only in the Old Testament, viz., Micah iii. 3.

(10)

Psalm xcviii. 5,	compared with	Isaiah li. 3.
קול זמרה		קול זמרה
"The voice of a psalm (or song)."		"The voice of a psalm (or song)."

This phrase occurs in no other place.

(11)

Psalm xcviii. 8,	compared with	Isaiah lv. 12.
ימחאו כף		ימחאו כף
"Clap their hands."		"Clap their hands."

This phrase occurs in no other place.

(12)

Psalm xcix. 3, 5, 9,	compared with	Isaiah vi. 3.
קדוש הוא 5 קדוש הוא 9 קדוש יהוה אלהינו		קדוש קדוש קדוש יהוה צבאות
"Holy is He... Holy is He... Holy is Jehovah our God."		"Holy, Holy, Holy, is Jehovah of Hosts."

(13)

Psalm xcix. 5,	compared with	Isaiah lxvi. 1.
הדום רגליו		הדום רגלי
"The footstool of His feet."		"The footstool of My feet."

The expression occurs only in four other places in the Old Testament, of which three seem to refer to the Ark, viz. Ps. cxxxii. 7; Lam. ii. 1; and 1 Chro. xxviii. 2.

The coincidences of Ps. xcviii. with the prophecies of Isaiah will be presented to the eye of the English reader most conveniently in the following form:—

Psalm xcviii.	compared with the prophecies of Isaiah.
"*O sing unto the Lord a new song.*" *v.* 1.	"*O sing unto the Lord a new song.*" xlii. 10.
"His right-hand and *His holy arm hath wrought deliverance for Him.*" *v.* 2.	"*His arm wrought deliverance for Him.*" lix. 16. "*Mine arm hath wrought deliverance for Me.*" lxiii. 5. "Jehovah hath made bare *His holy arm.*" lii. 10.
"He hath *remembered His lovingkindness* and His truth *toward the house of Israel.*" *v.* 3.	"I will make mention of (or *remember*) the *lovingkindnesses* of Jehovah.... and the great goodness *toward the house of Israel*.... according to the multitude of *His lovingkindnesses.*" lxiii. 7.
"*All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*" *v.* 3.	"*All the ends of the earth shall see* (or *have seen*) *the salvation of our God.*" lii. 10.
"*Shout aloud* unto Jehovah, all *the earth; break forth* and *sing joyously;* yea, sing praise." *v* 4.	"*Sing joyously*, O heavens, for Jehovah hath done it; *shout aloud*, ye lower parts of *the earth; break forth*, O ye mountains, into *a joyous song.*" xliv. 23.
"*And the voice of a psalm.*" *v.* 5.	"*And the voice of a psalm.*" li. 3.

Psalm xcviii. compared with	the prophecies of Isaiah.
"*Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof:* the *world*, and they that *dwell* therein." *v.* 7.	"*The sea, and the fulness thereof:* the isles, and those who inhabit (or *dwell* in) them." xlii. 10. (Cf. "the earth and *the fulness thereof*, the *world*[1], and all things that come forth of it." xxxiv. 1.)
"Let the floods *clap their hands.*" *v.* 8.	"All the trees of the field *shall clap their hands.*" lv. 12.
"Let the *mountains sing joyously* together." *v.* 8.	"The *mountains* and the hills break forth before you into *joyous singing.*" lv. 12.
"He shall *judge* the world with *righteousness* and the peoples with equity." *v.* 9.	"And He shall *judge* the poor with *righteousness* and reprove with *equity.*" xi. 4. Cf. lix. 4.

Amongst other coincidences between this series of psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah, we may note the following:—

(1) The use of the Piel form of נאה in the sense of *to be beautiful* or *becoming*. Cf. Ps. xciii. 5 with Isai. lii. 7. The *verb* appears to be used elsewhere only in the Song of Solomon, i. 10.

(2) The expression מאז, "from of old, everlasting," Ps. xciii. 2, a word which, though not exclusively used by Isaiah, is characteristic of his style, being used eight times in his earlier and later prophecies, and very rarely elsewhere.

(3) The use of תנחומים, "consolations." Cf. Ps. xciv. 19, 20; Isai. lxvi. 11. The masc. form occurs elsewhere only in Jer. xvi. 7, and the fem. form only in Job xv. 11, and xxi. 2.

(4) The use of some form of the verb שעע, or its cognate noun, in the sense of *delight*. Cf. Ps. xciv. 19, 20; Isai. v. 7, and lxvi. 12. The occurrence of any form of this word except in Ps. cxix. is very rare.

(5) The coincidence of יתאמרו, Ps. xciv. 4, with תתימרו, Isaiah lxi. 6. Whether the latter word be a derivative from אמר, or from ימר (see Fürst, 'Lex.'), is questioned; but the resemblance is remarkable, as the meaning is apparently the same.

We may note further (a) the use of שפט in conjunction with צדק, אמונה, and מישרים (cf. Pss. xcvi. 13, xcvii. 9; Isai. xi. 4, 5, lix. 4); (b) Ps. xcvii. 3, as compared with Isai. xlii. 25; (c) Ps. xcix. 1, ישב כרובים, as compared with Isai. xxxvii. 16, ישב הכרבים; (d) Ps. xcix. 1, תנוט הארץ, as compared with Isai. xxiv. 19, 20. Probably the true reading of the psalm is תנוע or תמוט.

Among other peculiarities more or less striking, we may observe the usage both by the Psalmist and the Prophet of the following words: (1) דכא and its cognate forms, Pss. xciii. 3, xciv. 5; Isai. iii. 15, xix. 10, liii. 5, 10, lvii. 15; (2) the Hiphil form of שקט Ps. xciv. 13; Isai. vii. 4, xxx. 15, xxxii. 17, lvii. 20; (3) תפארת Ps. xcvi. 6, a word used seventeen times by Isaiah; (4) רגז Ps. xcix. 1, a word which occurs eleven times in its different forms in Isaiah; (5) פעל in conjunction with מעשה Ps. xcii. 4; Isai. v. 12; and (6) מרום Pss. xcii. 9, xciii. 4, a word which occurs fourteen times in Isaiah.

It would be easy to adduce other coincidences of phraseology between this series of psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah, but it is believed that the above will suffice to establish either the identity of authorship, or the dependence of the Psalmist upon the Prophet, or of the Prophet upon the Psalmist. Before proceeding farther in the investigation of this subject, it will be desirable to present to the reader in a connected form the principal internal indications which these psalms afford of the date of their composition, some of which have been already noticed in their respective places.

It is generally agreed amongst modern critics that the principal epochs of Hebrew poetry (and it will scarcely admit of question that this series of psalms belongs to one of such epochs) were (1) the time of David; (2) that of Hezekiah; and (3) the period of, or shortly subsequent to, the captivity; to which periods some modern critics, though, as it seems, on insufficient evidence (see the Introduction to the Psalter, sec. 13), add that of the Maccabees.

[1] The word rendered *world*, which occurs only thirty-six times in the Old Testament, is found nine times in the earlier prophecies of Isaiah, and six times in this series of psalms.

The following reasons seem to determine the balance of evidence to be in favour of the composition of this series of psalms at, or about, the second of these periods, *i. e.* during the time of the prophet Isaiah.

(1) We not only miss all those allusions to the times and circumstances of the captivity and the restoration which are found in the psalms of later date[1], and also those words and forms which characterize alike the earliest and the latest books of the Hebrew Scriptures, but we find such allusions to the Ark with its overshadowing cherubim (cf. Pss. xci. 1, 4, xcv. 2, 6, xcvi. 6, xcix. 1, 5, c. 2), and probably to the monarchy (Ps. xcix. 4, and note in loc.) as find their obvious and natural explanation in the supposition that these psalms were composed whilst the temple of Solomon still stood, and whilst the royal house of David still continued to sit upon the throne.

(2) The state of Judæa with regard to the prospect of foreign invasion, as described in these psalms, corresponds closely with that of the reign of Ahaz and the first fourteen years of that of Hezekiah. "The floods," a figure of the world-powers both in the Old and the New Testament, are represented in Ps. xciii. 3 not only as having lifted up their voice, but as still lifting it up. "The floods *have lifted up*, O Lord, the floods *have lifted up*, the floods *do lift up* their waves." This description precisely accords with that given in Isai. viii. 7, when, after the invasion and partial subjugation of the northern kingdom by the Assyrians, and the threatened invasion of Judæa by the united forces of Israel and Syria, the Assyrian power is represented as threatening not only Israel but also Judah: "Now therefore behold the Lord bringeth up upon thee the waters of the river strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory[2]." The same description applies, though not, perhaps, in an equal degree, to the state of Judæa from the arrival of the messengers of Merodach-baladan, until the final destruction of the monarchy, after which time the figure of the rising and threatening floods would seem to be altogether inapplicable.

(3) The internal disorganization of Judæa described in Ps. xciv. *vv.* 5, 6, 16, 20, 21, corresponds very closely with that described in 2 Chro. xxix. 8, 9, and in Isai. i. (whatever the date of the composition of that chapter), iii. 12, 15, ix. 13, and x. 1, 2. The acts of injustice and oppression to which reference is made in Ps. xciv. (and to which there may be allusion, by way of contrast, in Ps. xcix. 4) appear to be primarily, if not exclusively, those of unrighteous judges, not of foreign oppressors. The Psalmist animadverts upon these with a severity similar to that of the Prophet, one of whose characteristics was the keen eye with which he surveyed the judicial administration of the affairs of his country. (See notes on *vv.* 5, 6, 8, 20, of Ps. xciv.)

(4) The subject-matter of these psalms, viz., the establishment of Jehovah's throne in righteousness, the confusion of idolaters, and the universal proclamation of "the gospel of the kingdom," is identical with the subject-matter of some of the confessedly genuine prophecies of Isaiah, as well as with that of those prophecies which are contained in chapters xl.—lxvi., the genuineness of which has been the subject of dispute in modern times. No more probable date, therefore, so far as respects the subjects on which they treat, can be assigned to these psalms than the time of the prophet Isaiah, which was the second great epoch of those royal prophecies which had their origin in the days of Samuel and David. This probability is confirmed by a comparison of the jubilant strain of these psalms, and of the contemporaneous (as it is thought) prophecies of Isaiah, descriptive of the Second Advent, with the darker and more minatory character of the greater portion of those prophecies, relating to the same event, which were delivered subsequently to the Babylonish captivity. Cf. *e.g.* Zech. xii. 10—14, xiv. passim; Malachi iii. 2, 3, iv. 5, 6, with Isai. xii. passim, xxv. 9, xxvi. 19. The improbability of the composition of these psalms between the time of Isaiah and the captivity, not excepting even the period of Josiah's reign, is generally admitted.

(5) The repeated allusions to convulsions of the earth throughout this series of psalms (cf. Pss. xciii. 2, xcvi. 10, xcvii. 4, 5, xcix. 1) find their most natural historical groundwork in the great earthquake in the days of king Uzziah (cf. Amos i. 1; Mic. i. 4; Zech. xiv. 5).

(6) The indications found in these psalms of the restoration of the temple-service (cf. xcv. 2, xcvi. 8, xcviii. 5, 6, c. 2) exactly harmonize with the great revival of national religious worship, including both vocal and instrumental music, in the days of king Hezekiah, in the account of which in 2 Chro.

[1] *E.g.* in such a psalm as xcix. we should naturally expect to find some allusion to the restoration from captivity, had it been composed after that event, and not improbably the mention of Daniel as well as Samuel, amongst those who called upon the name of the Lord.

[2] It must be noted here that the word which occurs in the singular number, and which is rendered *river* in Isaiah viii. 7, is the same as that which occurs in the plural number, and which is rendered "floods" in Ps. xciii. 3. Moreover one of the epithets ("many" or *mighty*) of the "waters" of this river is the same as one of those of the "waters" of Ps. xciii. 4.

xxix. *vv.* 25—28 we find mention of three of the same instruments to which reference is made in this series of psalms, viz. the *nabla*, the harp, and the trumpets. "The words of David" (2 Chro. xxix. 30), in which Hezekiah "commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord," may refer to Ps. xcvi. in its original form (cf. 1 Chro. xvi. 7).

Such being some of the grounds on which the date of the composition of these psalms may reasonably be assigned to the times of Isaiah, it is desirable to inquire further whether, in the absence of direct proof of the identity of authorship, there are such internal indications of originality as would lead us to assign the priority of composition to the prophecies or to the psalms.

Now it might fairly be urged in support of the theory that the Prophet borrowed from the Psalmist (1) that if the liturgical psalms of this series were composed during the first fourteen years of the reign of Hezekiah, they must have been anterior to the later prophecies of Isaiah, in which the larger part of the coincidences which have been noted appear; (2) that it is reasonable to suppose that when once the psalms in question had become a portion of the liturgical worship of the sanctuary, later writers should borrow from them both their ideas and their phraseology; and (3) that if, as some of our best modern critics believe, the passage which occurs almost verbatim in Micah iv. 1—4, and Isaiah ii. 2—5, is original in the case of the former writer, and borrowed by the contemporary prophet, there is a yet further presumption in favour of the originality of the Psalmist rather than of the Prophet in the present case.

On the other hand, it may be urged (1) that if the probability of the composition of the *liturgical* psalms of this series during the reign of Hezekiah be admitted, there are no decisive indications of their composition during the first fourteen years of that reign, and consequently, that there is no proof that Isaiah must have been acquainted with these psalms as portions of that temple-worship which had been recently restored; and (2) that the quotation of a particular passage from a contemporary prophet (if the priority of composition on the part of Micah be conceded) is no sufficient warrant for the supposition that Isaiah, the greatest, and perhaps the most original, of all the prophets, was indebted to the writer of a few lyrical poems for so much which is characteristic of the style and phraseology of both. In any case it may be urged with equal or greater force in favour of the originality of the Prophet, rather than of the Psalmist, that numerous quotations from the prophecies of Isaiah, or manifest allusions to them, are found both in the later psalms, and also in the later prophecies. The following will suffice by way of illustration:—

Ps. cii. 26, compared with Isai. l. 9, and li. 6.
Ps. ciii. 11, " Isai. lv. 9.
Ps. civ. 2, " Isai. xl. 22, and li. 13.
Ps. cv. 1, " Isai. xii. 4,
(where the whole of the verse is found verbatim.)
Ps. cvii. 23, compared with Isai. xlii. 10.
Ps. cvii. 33, 35, " Isai. xli. 18,
(where the same eight words occur verbatim, with the exception of a slight variation in the form of one of them. Cf. Isai. xxxv. 7.)
Ps. cxviii. 14, compared with Isai. xii. 2,
(where the whole of the verse occurs verbatim, with the addition of the word "Jehovah.")
Ps. cxviii. 28, compared with Isai. xxv. 1.
Ps. cxlvii. 4, 5, " Isai. xl. 26, 28.
Jer. vi. 20, " Isai. i. 11.
Jer. x. 4, " Isai. xl. 19, and xli. 7.
Jer. xii. 9, " Isai. lvi. 9.
Jer. xxxi. 35, " Isai. li. 15,
(where the same seven words occur verbatim.)
Jer. l. 8, compared with Isai. xlviii. 20, and lii. 11.
Nahum i. 15, " Isai. lii. 7,
(where the same six words occur verbatim.)
Mal. iii. 1, compared with Isai. xl. 3.

There seem, moreover, to be some positive indications that if Isaiah were not the writer of the psalms in question, the priority of authorship must have been on the part of the Prophet rather than on that of the Psalmist. The reign of Hezekiah is the *earliest* period to which the liturgical psalms of this series have been assigned with any degree of probability, whilst most modern critics assign to them a much later date; whereas some of the most remarkable coincidences of style and phraseology between this series of psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah are found in those portions of the prophecies which were composed previously to the accession of Hezekiah to the throne. It will suffice to allude to the characteristic use of *anadiplosis*, or iteration, in the earlier as well as in the

later prophecies[1], and also to the occurrence of the most remarkable of all the coincidences of phraseology, viz., the use of פצח *patsach*, not only in a signification peculiar to the Prophet and the Psalmist, but also in conjunction with רנה *rinnah* (see no. 9), in Isai. xiv. 7, the date of which prophecy appears to be positively determined by *v.* 28 of the same chapter. Other coincidences between this series of psalms and the *earlier* prophecies of Isaiah have been already noticed.

But in addition to the a priori improbability that the greatest of the Hebrew prophets should have been indebted to the contemporaneous, or nearly contemporaneous, writer of a few short lyrical poems, both for portions of the subject-matter of his great theme, and also for some of the most distinctive characteristics of his style and phraseology, there appears to be internal evidence in some of the coincidences which have been enumerated, if adoption, or imitation, on either side be admitted, that the prophecies were anterior to the psalms.

In the case of coincidence (2) *e.g.* we find that the figure of *clothing* pervades the two preceding chapters of the prophecies of Isaiah (cf. xlix. 18, l. 3, 9) as well as the preceding verses of chap. li., viz. *vv.* 6, 8, and that it is found also in the beginning of chap. lii.; and again in lix. 17, lxi. 3, 10, lxiii. 1, 2, 3, and lxiv. 6. Again, in the case of coincidence (9) we find the phrase peculiar to the Psalmist and the Prophet repeated by the latter six times in writings which, at the lowest computation, extend over a period of upwards of fifteen years, and probably over thirty years. Once more, in the case of coincidence (12), if the connection between Ps. xcix. and the vision recorded in Isai. vi. be more than accidental, the question of priority does not admit of doubt; inasmuch as whilst the recorded account of Isaiah's vision might well have become the groundwork of Ps. xcix., that psalm could not, by any possibility, have been the groundwork of the prophetic vision. The same inference may be fairly drawn from the existence in these psalms of that remarkable characteristic of the earlier as well as of the later writings of Isaiah to which allusion has already been made, viz., *anadiplosis* or iteration. When the character of both compositions is taken into account, and it is remembered that in the case of the prophet this distinctive characteristic is traced throughout writings which probably extended over upwards of half a century, it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that if the psalms and the prophecies were not the productions of the same writer, and there be ground for supposing that there was imitation on either side, the originality in this, as in the other coincidences which have been noticed, must have been on the side of the Prophet and not on that of the Psalmist[2].

The general results of this inquiry may be briefly summed up in the following words:

(1) There seems good reason for assigning a common authorship to most, if not all, of the series of psalms beginning with the 91st, and ending with the 100th (more particularly to Pss. xciii. and xcv.—c.), and *possibly* to these psalms and to the prophecies of Isaiah.

(2) The Psalmist, if not identical with the prophet Isaiah, seems to have been largely indebted both to the earlier and later prophecies of Isaiah for his subject-matter, for the characteristics of his style, and for his phraseology.

(3) The date of the composition of these psalms seems to be approximately assigned, with the greatest amount of probability, to the times of Hezekiah, whose accession to the throne may have formed the historical groundwork of this remarkable revival of the regal prophecies, both in the writings of Isaiah and in this series of psalms. (See note on Ps. xciii. 1.) In any case there appear to be strong grounds for assigning to this series of psalms an earlier date than that of the captivity.

The bearing of these results, if established, upon the date of composition and the unity of authorship of the later, as well as the earlier, prophecies commonly ascribed to Isaiah is too obvious to require elucidation.

[1] *E.g.* "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day," ii. *v.* 11; ib. *v.* 17; "When He ariseth to shake terribly the earth," ib. *v.* 19; ib. *v.* 21; "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still," ix. *v.* 12; ib. *v.* 17. The occurrence of similar repetitions throughout chapters xl.—lxvi. scarcely needs illustration. The following instances from ch. xl. will suffice. (1) "Comfort ye, comfort ye," *v.* 1; (2) "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," *v.* 7; "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," *v.* 8; (3) "O Zion that bringest good tidings.... O Jerusalem that bringest good tidings," *v.* 9; (4) "Lift up thy voice, lift it up," ib.; (5) "To whom then will ye liken God?" *v.* 18; "To whom then will ye liken me?" *v.* 25.

[2] The following are instances of *anadiplosis* in this series of psalms; xcii. 9, xciii. 1, 3, xciv. 1, 3, 23, xcvi. 1, 2, 7, 8, 13, xcviii. 4, 5. Other instances might be added to the number, as *e.g.* the thrice-repeated refrain of Ps. xcix. 1, 5, 9. The occurrence of *anadiplosis* in other poetical portions of the Old Testament, as *e.g.* in the song of Deborah; in Pss. x. 9, and ciii. 1, 2, 22; and in the refrain of some other of the psalms, as *e.g.* Pss. xlii., xlvi., lvii., lxxx., cvii., and cxxxvi., is not sufficiently common to neutralize the force of this coincidence.

PROVERBS.

INTRODUCTION.

I. *Title.*

1. THE opening words of the book, "The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel" (i. 1), give us its current Hebrew title. In common speech the first word of that verse, as with the opening words of other books (*Mishlè*, "proverbs"), was used as an abbreviated title. The same abbreviation has been adopted by translators, and "Proverbs" has become in the LXX., the Vulgate, and the Authorized Version, the common heading of. the book. It would seem, however, as if there had been at one time another name given to it, as a title of honour. Like the two books of analogous nature in the Apocrypha, which, probably, took their title from it, it was known as the Book of Wisdom. So it was described in the Talmud. So it was named by Melito of Sardis (Euseb. 'H. E.' IV. 26), by Hegesippus (in this case, as probably by Melito, from a Jewish tradition), by Irenæus (Euseb. 'H. E.' IV. 22), by Clement of Rome ('Ep. ad Cor.' I. 57), by the great body of early Christian writers. To this was commonly added a special epithet of praise. It was the πανάρετος σοφία, the "all-excellent wisdom." That title (the epithet included) was applied by the Fathers to the Wisdom of Solomon; yet more frequently to the Wisdom of the son of Sirach, more commonly known as Ecclesiasticus. But it remains good that it was applied by both Jews and Christians to the Proverbs of Solomon. It indicated that the book took its place, as the representative of the Wisdom of which the Hebrews thought so much, at the head of the whole class of books, Canonical or Apocryphal, which were known as Sapiential.

2. The word which thus forms the present title of the book calls for some special notice. The Greek παροιμία, the Latin *proverbium*, express only the fact that the saying so described is current among men, a "by-word," differing in its origin, it may be, from other words, at first *out* of the way, afterwards common and familiar. The Hebrew word for "proverb" (*mashâl*) has a much more definite significance. Its root-meaning is that of comparison, the putting this and that together, noting likeness in things unlike. It answers, *i.e.*, to the Greek παραβολή rather than παροιμία[1]. The primary idea of a Hebrew proverb, traceable throughout the book, in spite of the wider range of meaning which the word subsequently acquired, is that of comparison and similitude. The words of xxvi. 7, "The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools," which speak of the *mashâl* in this sense, are also the best illustration of its meaning. That it was applied also to moral apophthegms of varying length, pointed and pithy in their form, even though there might be no similitude, is evident enough throughout the book. Elsewhere it is used with a partial extension of its meaning in another direction. Discourses in which there is more

[1] The Vulgate gives "*Parabolæ Salomonis*" in i. 1, though it has *Proverbia* as the title of the book.

or less of a poetic character, even though there be no formal comparison, and no didactic result, are, as in the case of that of Balaam (Num. xxiii. 7, 18, xxiv. 3, 15, 20, 21, 23), and Job (xxvii. 1, xxix. 1), and Ezekiel (xvii. 2, xx. 49, xxiv. 3), described as "parables." The triumph-song of Num. xxi. 27—30, uttered by those who "speak in proverbs," serves as another instance of the wider meaning.

3. Proverbs, in one or other of these senses, are characteristic of a comparatively early stage in the mental growth of most nations. Men find in the outer world analogies to their own experience, and are helped by them to generalize and formulate what they have observed. A single startling or humorous fact fixes itself in their minds as the type to which all like facts may be referred, as when men used the proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1 S. x. 12). The mere result of an induction to which other instances may be referred fixes itself in their minds with the charm of a discovery, as in the "proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked" (1 S. xxiv. 13). Sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly, they find in a law thus stated, with or without a similitude, the explanation of the course of events in their own lives or in the history of their nation, as when Israel comforted itself, in the midst of its shame and misery, with the proverb that "the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and that the children's teeth are set on edge" (Jer. xxxi. 29; Ezek. xviii. 2). Such proverbs are found in the history of all nations, generally in its earlier stages. For the most part, there is no record of their birth. No one knows their author. They find acceptance with men, not as resting upon the authority of a revered name, but from their inherent truth, or semblance of truth. Afterwards, commonly at a much later period, men make collections of them.

4. The book of Proverbs, however, is not such a collection. So far as it includes what had previously been current in familiar sayings (and these were, probably, comparatively few in number), there was a process of selection, guided by a distinct didactic aim, excluding all that were local, personal, or simply humorous, receiving those which fell in with the ethical purpose of the teacher. As in the history of other nations, so among the Hebrews, there rose up, at a certain stage of culture, those to whom the proverb was the most natural mode of utterance, who embodied in it all that they had observed or thought out as to the phenomena of nature or of human life. Such among the Greeks, in various degrees, were Hesiod, and Solon, and Phocylides, and Pythagoras, and, in a yet higher measure, Theognis. Such among the nations in contact with Israel were those whose names were held in honour among "the children of the east country" (1 K. iv. 30), the sages of Teman (Jer. xlix. 7). Such in Israel itself were those whose fame was afterwards eclipsed by one greater than their own, "Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol" (1 K. iv. 31). Such pre-eminently was the sage to whose authorship the book of Proverbs is assigned, Solomon, the son of David.

5. The narrative of 1 K. iv. 32, in describing the wisdom of Solomon, gives the number of his proverbs as three thousand, and of his songs as a thousand and five, and the definite precision in each case may fairly lead to the inference that there was at the time when that book was written a known collection of sayings ascribed to Solomon far longer than the present book, and of songs which are almost, or altogether, lost to us. The scope of that book may probably have included a far wider range of subjects, trees, from "the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall," the creatures that have life in all their wonderful variety, noting their outward phenomena, drawing illustrations from them, it may be working them into fables[1]. The book with which we have now to deal is, on the other hand, from first to last ethical in its scope, deals but sparingly, through the larger portion of its contents, with

[1] An almost unrivalled instance of the extravagance of conjecture (not without its worth as bearing upon the trustworthiness of other theories of the same commentator), may be found in Hitzig's hypothesis that the word "hyssop" (ὕσσωπος) passed into common use as the title of a book of fables, became known to the Greeks, and re-appeared in the name of Æsop as the author of the book, and the father of fables generally.

the world of animals and plants, and has nothing that takes the form of fable.

6. *Structure of the Book.* A more careful examination shews, however, that we have to deal with a compilation from different sources as well as with a selection from the sayings of one man only; and one which, in its present form, was made some three centuries after the time of Solomon. One considerable section of the book consists of proverbs that were first arranged and written out under Hezekiah (xxv. 1). Agur, the son of Jakeh (xxx. 1), and a king named Lemuel (xxxi. 1), are named as the authors of the last two chapters. The book is then primâ facie analogous in its composition to the Psalms, an anthology from the sayings of the sages of Israel, taking its name from him who was the chiefest of them, as that is an anthology from the hymns not of David only, but of the sons of Korah and others, some named, and some anonymous. The question how far the book gives us the teaching of Solomon himself, what portions of it may be assigned to him, and what to some later writer, is therefore one that may legitimately be asked. It is not surprising, looking to the scantiness of the evidence, and the varying impressions which arguments drawn from internal coincidences or discrepancies make upon different minds, that it should have been very differently answered. Certain landmarks present themselves, dividing the book into sections, each of which is obviously, on any hypothesis, a complete whole. It will be necessary to take each of these separately, to note the theories which have been put forth as to its authorship and date, and the evidence on which they rest, and to leave them to the judgment of the reader.

(*a*) i. 1—6. The title and introduction to the book, describing its contents and aim. As being of the nature of a preface to the whole work, pointing to the "words of the wise" (*v.* 6) in general, as well as to the proverbs of Solomon, there seems good reason for believing that while *v.* 1 gave the original title of the book, the other verses were added by the last compiler, in whose hands it took its present shape. So Ewald and Bertheau.

(*b*) i. 7. The title is followed by what has the character of a motto, laying down the principle which is the basis of the whole book. This, too, may be assigned to the same compiler.

(*c*) i. 8—ix. 18. The whole section is obviously continuous, marked by the same distinguishing words and phrases. It has the character of the *mashâl* in its longer, more expanded, form rather than of the brief emphatic proverb. It is one long exhortation, addressed by the teacher to his scholar, and each subsection opens with the words, "my son" or "my children" (i. 8, 10, 15, ii. 1, iii. 1, 11, 21, iv. 1, 10, 20, v. 1, 7, vi. 1, 3, 20, vii. 1, 24). In ch. viii. there is a change as to a higher strain. It is no longer the wise teacher speaking to his disciple, but Wisdom herself who speaks, not to the individual seeker, but to the sons of men at large (viii. 4). This personification of Wisdom as a living power, and the stress laid upon her greatness and beauty, are indeed the characteristic features of the whole of this portion (i. 20, iii. 13—20, iv. 5—9, ix. 1—6). Equally characteristic is the contrasted picture of the "strange woman," the "foreigner," sc. the harlot or adulteress, whose fascination is most perilous to the soul entering on its time of trial (ii. 16—19, v. 3—11, 20, vi. 24—35, vii. 5—27, ix. 13—18). The picture of the one is set over against the other, as in the 'Choice of Heracles,' ascribed to Prodicus, while the form of the whole, in its continued earnest appeal to the "son," who is thus addressed, reminds us, in spite of many points of contrast, of the 'Counsels' of Theognis.

The whole of this section has been ascribed by some commentators (*e.g.* Ewald and Bertheau) to a later author than Solomon, on grounds which, if not conclusive, are, at least, weighty enough to call for a fair statement and discussion. How uncertain the result is may be inferred from the fact that while Ewald refers it to the seventh century B.C., and looks on it as all but the latest portion of the book, Hitzig, on the other hand, treats it as the oldest, and assigns it to the ninth century.

(1) It has been inferred from the new title of "the proverbs of Solomon," at x. 1, that the compiler wished to indicate that the first nine chapters were by ano-

ther writer, and that this inference is confirmed by the contrast between the continuous strain of counsel of the one, and the brief pithy antithetic maxims of the other. (2) The warnings of i. 10—19, ii. 12—15, iv. 14—17 against the life of robbers as a besetting danger for the young point, it is said, to a time of greater disorder than the reign of Solomon. (3) New words or forms, such as the plural חכמות (*Chochmoth*, wisdoms) for wisdom, the Hebrew words for the "strange woman," the "stranger," for the harlot temptress, fall in with the same theory. (4) Traces of the influence of the book of Job on the writer of this portion are found in the numerous parallelisms[1] between the two, which meet us in it, and which are not found to the same extent, if at all, in the next section, and it is inferred that it must therefore have been written after the beginning of the seventh century, to which that book is referred. It is evident, however, that all these data are to say the least very uncertain.

(1) The difference of style is not greater than would be natural in one who was writing, it may be, in maturer age, a preface to maxims which had been noted down separately from time to time. (2) The life of the outlaw was one of constant recurrence in the earlier history of Israel (Judg. ix. 4, xi. 3; 1 S. xxii. 2), and there is no ground for supposing that it was entirely suppressed under Solomon. (3) The argument from peculiar words, always more or less fallacious, is traversed by the far larger number of words, which being characteristic of, all but peculiar to, the Proverbs, are common in nearly the same proportion to all parts of it[2]. (4) The uncertainty as to the date of Job makes any argument based upon it of very doubtful weight. The resemblance might be explained by the supposition, on the one hand, that it was written after Proverbs, or on the other, and more probably, that being of earlier date than the reign of Solomon the parallelisms do not prove that the passages in which they occur were not written by that king. It may be added, as arguments in favour of identity of authorship, (1) that there are no warnings against idolatry, such as would have been natural in one who lived under the later kings of Judah; (2) that the danger of contamination from foreign vices was precisely that which began to be felt under Solomon; (3) that the forms of luxury, described in vii. 16, 17, are such as were conspicuous in his reign (1 K. x. 28).

(*d*) x. 1—xxii. 16. The title of "the proverbs of Solomon," though not enough to warrant the inference that has just been discussed, indicates with sufficient clearness that the section to which it is prefixed had an independent origin. The continuous teaching ceases, and in place of the lofty strains of chaps. viii. and ix. we have a series of isolated maxims, short, pithy, antithetic, the true type of the Hebrew proverbs, hardly ever carried beyond the limits of a single verse, dealing with the common facts of life, and viewing them from the point of prudence. By the consent of nearly all critics, this is the kernel of the whole book, representing the wisdom which made Solomon famous among men. Containing, as it does, about 400 of these maxims, it may be thought of as probably a selection from the larger number of 3000, referred to in 1 K. iv. 32, made possibly under the

[1]

(1)	Prov. i. 7.	Job xxviii. 28.
(2)	— ii. 4, 14.	— iii. 21, 22.
(3)	— iii. 11, 12.	— v. 17.
(4)	— iii. 23.	— v. 22.
(5)	— iv. 18.	— xxii. 28.
(6)	— vii. 23.	— xvi. 13.
(7)	— viii. 25.	— xxxviii. 8.

[2] (1) פרע (in sense of rejecting), i. 25, iv. 15, viii. 33, xiii. 18, xv. 32.

(2) The phrase יוסף לקח (*will increase learning*), i. 5, ix. 9, xvi. 21, 23.

(3) שכל טוב (*good understanding*), iii. 4, xiii. 15.

(4) אגר (*gather*), vi. 8, x. 5.

(5) מדון (*strife*), vi. 14, xv. 18, xvi. 28, xvii. 14, xviii. 18, xxi. 9, 19, xxii. 10, xxiii. 29, xxv. 24, xxvi. 20, 21, xxvii. 15, xxviii. 25, xxix. 22. The word occurs in three other passages only of the Old Testament.

(6) חסר לב (*void of understanding*), vi. 32, vii. 7, ix. 4, 16, x. 13, 21, xi. 12, xii. 11, xv. 21, xvii. 18, xxiv. 30.

(7) אישון (in the sense of the *central point of darkness*), vii. 9, xx. 20.

(8) The phrase העז פנים ("*hardeneth the face*"), vii. 13, xxi. 29.

(9) חרש רע (*devise evil*), iii. 29, vi. 14, 18, xii. 20, xiv. 22.

(10) תקע כף (*strike hand*, in the sense of giving a pledge), vi. 1, xi. 15, xvii. 18, xxii. 26.

direction of the king himself, and prefaced by the more homiletic teaching of chaps. i.—ix. There is, as has been said, no systematic order, but here and there we find two or more verses in succession dealing with the same topic (as *e.g.* x. 6 and 7, 8 and 9, 13 and 14, 16 and 17, 18 and 19, xi. 25 and 26, 30 and 31, and especially the recurrence of the name "Jehovah," xv. 33, xvi. 1—9, 11, and of the word "king" in xvi. 10, 12—15) in a way which throws some light on the process by which the selection had been made, as though there had been something like a commonplace book, in which, though there was no systematic arrangement, there was a certain degree of grouping under different heads or catch-words. Certain phrases too are characteristic of this section, the "fountain" or "well of life" (x. 11, xiii. 14, xiv. 27, xvi. 22), the "tree of life" (xi. 30, xiii. 12, xv. 4), the "snares of death" (xiii. 14, xiv. 27), the thought of "health" or "healing," in its ethical sense, as contrasted with the diseases of the soul (xii. 18, xiii. 17, xiv. 30, xv. 4, xvi. 24, but also in iv. 22, vi. 15), the "destruction" that follows upon evil-doing (x. 14, 15, xiii. 3, xiv. 28, xviii. 7), the use of a peculiar word (יפיח) for "speaking" or "uttering" either truth or falsehood (xii. 17, xiv. 5, 25, xix. 5, 9), of another (סלף) for "perverting" or "overthrowing" (xiii. 6, xix. 3, xxii. 12), the statement that evil shall "not go unpunished" (xi. 21, xvi. 5, xvii. 5, but also in vi. 29 and xxviii. 20), though "hand join to hand" (xi. 21, xvi. 5), the use of a peculiar form of an unusual verb (התגלע) for "meddling" (xvii. 14, xviii. 1, xx. 3, and nowhere else in the Old Testament), of another, as peculiar, for "whisperer" (xvi. 28, xviii. 8, but also xxvi. 20, 22), the frequent recurrence of the formula "there is" (יש) at the beginning of a clause (xi. 24, xiii. 7, 23, xiv. 12, xvi. 25, xviii. 24, xix. 18, xx. 15). The last, however, recurring, as it does, in iii. 28, viii. 21, xxiii. 18, xxiv. 14, might fairly be put on the list of words common to the first two sections, and, to some small extent, indicating unity of authorship. As regards the substance of the teaching we may note the stress laid, especially in ch. xv. 3, 8, 9, 11, 16, 25, 26, 29, 33, and xvi. 1—7, 9, 11, 33, on the thought that Jehovah, the "Lord," is the supreme Giver of all good, the Judge and Ruler of mankind, all-knowing, and ordering all things; that the king, thought of in the ideal greatness which was natural in the time of Solomon, and was hardly so at a later period, was as the counterpart and representative of Jehovah, an earthly Providence (xvi. 10—15, xix. 6, 12, xx. 8, 26, 28, xxi. 1).

(*e*) xxii. 17—xxiv. 23. At xxii. 17 there is again a break, and we meet with the more continuous teaching, the personal address, of the teacher to his "son" (xxiii. 15, 19, 26, xxiv. 13, 21), the same warnings against sins of impurity (xxiii. 27, 28), the same declaration of the end which the teacher has in view (xxii. 17—21), as we met with in chaps. i.—ix. Here, he seems to say, are the "words of the wise," which had been promised in the title of the book (i. 6). It might seem a natural hypothesis that the same writer, having made the selection which forms the central portion of the book, wrote both prologue and epilogue to it, and that this, with the short section (xxiv. 23—34), was the form in which the book was current until it received its last additions in the reign of Hezekiah.

(*f*) xxiv. 23—34. Here also there is a break and a new title. "These things also belong to the wise," sc. are spoken by them, fulfil the promise of the title (i. 6) that it would include the "words of the wise," wherever the compiler found them. Short as the section is, it presents in the parable of the field of the slothful (xxiv. 30—34) some characteristic features not to be found in the other portions of the book. What had been spoken before barely and briefly (vi. 9) is now reproduced with a pictorial vividness. The teacher has learnt to see an inner meaning in the desolation that met his view. And here, as in vii. 7, he speaks, as reproducing what he himself has seen with his own eyes. What was before a general maxim, becomes sharper and more pointed, as a lesson of experience.

(*g*) xxv.—xxix. 27. The superscription of this section, "These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out," is, in many ways, significant. It pre-supposes the existence of a previous collec-

tion, known as the Proverbs of Solomon, and recognized as at once authentic and authoritative. It shews that there were also current, orally, or in writing, other proverbs not included in that collection. It brings before us an instance, marked indeed, but one which we cannot think of as solitary, of the activity of that period in collecting, arranging, editing the writings of an earlier age. It is a distinct statement, that both the collection that precedes, and that which follows, were at that time, after careful inquiry, recognized as by Solomon himself. The chapters to which it is prefixed present a general resemblance to the portion, ch. x.—xxii. 16, which all critics have regarded as the oldest portion of the book. There is the same stress laid on the ideal excellence of the kingly office (compare xxv. 2—7 with xvi. 10—15), the same half-grouping under special words and thoughts, as *e.g.* in the verses xxv. 2—7, referring to kings, in the words "take away," in xxv. 4, 5, in the use of the same word (in Hebrew) for "strife," or "cause" (xxv. 9), of "gold" (xxv. 11, 12), of the "fool" in the first ten verses of ch. xxvi., of the "slothful" in xxvi. 13—16, of the "righteous" in xxix. 2, 7, 16. The average length of the proverbs is about the same, in most there is the same general parallelism of the clauses. There is a freer use of direct similitudes. In one passage (xxvii. 23—27) we have, as an exceptional case, a word of counsel, which is neither a proverb nor a comparison, and is carried through five verses, in which, unless we assume a latent allegory, like that of the "vineyard of the slothful," in xxiv. 30—34, the instruction seems to be economic rather than ethical in its character, designed, it may be, to uphold the older agricultural life of the Israelites as contrasted with the growing tendency to seek wealth by commerce, and so fall into the luxury and profligacy of the Phœnicians.

(*h*) xxx. The two chapters that follow present problems of greater difficulty, and open a wider field for conjecture. New names meet us, entirely foreign to all that we know of the history of Israel; a new word is applied to the teaching, which is commonly used to describe prophetic, rather than didactic utterances. The word translated "prophecy" (xxx. 1, xxxi. 1) (משא *massa*) is elsewhere, with scarcely an exception, rendered "burden," either in its literal sense (as in Num. iv. 15, 19, xi. 11, 17 et al.), or, as denoting a solemn speech or oracle, uttered by a prophet, as in the titles of the series of chapters in Isaiah (xiii.—xxiii.) that contain such predictions. In Jer. xxiii. 33—38, the "burden of the Lord" occurs with a strange frequency as the word for a prophet's warning as to the immediate future of his own, or of another people, but is nowhere translated "prophecy," except in the two passages now under discussion[1]. A somewhat obscure passage in 1 Chro. xv. 22, where Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, is said to have been "for *massa*," or (as in the A.V.) for "*song*," and to have instructed "about the *song*, for he was skilful," may present a partial approximation to a like use of the word. If this meaning be received here, we must think of it, as applied to both these chapters, as indicating a marked difference between them and the hortative addresses, or the collections of apophthegms of which, up to this time, the book had been composed.

It has been maintained, however, by some critics of eminence[2], that the word is here a proper, not a common noun; that we have in these two chapters fragments of the gnomic wisdom of two sages of a "land" of Massa. The existence of a country so called is inferred from the appearance of the name in the list of the sons of Ishmael, in Gen. xxv. 14, and 1 Chro. i. 30, in close connection with Dumah[3], and it is assumed that those who dwelt there, whether belonging to Ishmael or Israel, were among

[1] The Vulgate in both passages gives "visio." The LXX. substitutes an entirely different verse for xxx. 1, and in xxxi. 1 gives χρηματισμός.

[2] Hitzig, Bertheau, Vaihinger, Bunsen, Zoeckler, and, though with many differences in detail, Muehlau and Delitzsch.

[3] The hypothesis which Hitzig connects with this interpretation, that the kingdom of Massa was founded by the Simeonites in the reign of Hezekiah, as a sequel to the emigration mentioned in 1 Chro. iv. 39—43, does not call for special notice here. It comes in as the explanation of the fact that the two fragments supposed to have had this origin bear, as they do, the impress of a faith identical with that of Israel.

the "children of the East," whose wisdom had become proverbial (1 K. iv. 30), and that their words were therefore thought worthy of being appended to those of the sage by whom they were surpassed. And so, with the help of some changes in the vowel points of the original, "Agur the son of Jakeh, the prophecy," is transformed into "Agur the son of her to whom Massa is obedient," sc. the queen of Massa; and xxxi. 1 appears, after a like change, as "The words of (or "for") Lemuel, king of Massa, which his mother taught him." Agur and Lemuel are thus made out to be brothers, and the queen, who is referred to as more famous than either of her children, is made the possessor of a wisdom which places her on a level with the queen of the South, or the son of David himself.

Ingenious as the hypothesis is, the evidence can hardly be received as satisfying. We have no distinct proof of the existence of any kingdom of Massa, still less of its being identical with any settlement of the Israelites. Other theories, maintained by older writers, that Agur and Lemuel are identical with Solomon, or that Agur, as meaning the "collector," is an ideal name for one who gathers up the wise sayings of others, may also be dismissed as having little or nothing to support them. The conclusion to which we are led is that we must be content to take Agur as the name of some sage otherwise unknown to us, and the word rendered "prophecy" as pointing to the higher, more solemn tone, that marks at least the opening of each of the two chapters.

The remaining words of the superscription of ch. xxx. have given rise to conjectures as conflicting. By Ewald the two names Ithiel (which appears in Neh. xi. 7) and Ucal are taken as two ideal names, the first meaning "God is with me," and the second "I am strong," both names of the same ideal person, the representative of a divine wisdom, meeting, as in *vv.* 4, 5, the confession of ignorance and blindness. By others (Hitzig, Bertheau, Muehlau) the words are treated as not being names at all, but part of the opening words of Agur himself, the introduction to the strange complaint, or confession, which opens so abruptly, in *v.* 2[1], "I have toiled for God, have toiled for God, and am weary." Leaving the problems of the title, we may note with more certainty the leading features of the section itself, the less didactic, more enigmatic character of the whole, as though it corresponded specially to the "dark sayings" of i. 6, the grouping of the phænomena into quaternions, the "four" sometimes coming (as in Amos i., ii.) as the climax after "three" (*vv.* 15, 18, 21, 29), sometimes standing by itself (*v.* 24), or omitted, though the quaternion itself is complete (*vv.* 11—14). The phænomena themselves shew a strange intermingling of facts belonging to the brute and to the human world, in some cases with an analogy between the two, expressed or implied, as in *vv.* 19, 30, 31, while in others (as in *vv.* 21—23, 24—28) each group stands apart by itself. In the prominence given to these facts connected with the living creatures round us, we seem to catch imperfect echoes of the strain which pervades the description of the wild ass, the horse, behemoth, and leviathan in Job, just as xxx. 4 is unmistakeably a reproduction of the thought, almost of the words, of Job xxxviii. 4. Whensoever and by whomsoever written, this section shews the influence of that poem as clearly as the earlier sections did. Probably, without adopting the precarious hypotheses discussed above, we may see in it a fragment of a work written by one belonging originally to the country to which many critics have been led to refer the book of Job itself, a proselyte to the faith which the occurrence of the name Jehovah in *v.* 9 proves that the writer had received. The reign of Hezekiah was conspicuous for the re-opening of intercourse with these neighbouring nations (2 Chro. xxxii. 23), for the admission of converts from them among the citizens of Zion (Ps. lxxxvii.), and, as we have seen, for the zeal shewn in collecting and adding to the canon whatever bore upon it the stamp of a lofty and heavenly wisdom.

(*i*) xxxi. 1—9. The title of this section has been in part discussed already. Retaining the A.V. rendering of "the prophecy," and therefore rejecting the

[1] See for fuller details the note on xxx. 1.

theory which makes Lemuel a king of Massa, the brother or the friend of Agur, we have to note two other conjectures, neither of which can be said to rest on any sure ground, (1) that of most Jewish and some Patristic commentators that Lemuel is a name for Solomon, and that the words of his mother's reproof were spoken when the first promise of his reign was beginning to pass into sensuality and excess, (2) that suggested by Ewald (in harmony with his view of Ithiel and Agur) that here also we have a simply ideal name, Lemuel, he who is "for God," the true king who leads a life consecrated to the service of Jehovah. Here also we must be content to confess our ignorance who Lemuel was; what was the occasion of the "prophecy" addressed remains a problem which we have no data for solving. All that can be said is that it probably belongs to the same period as ch. xxx. and was added to the book not earlier than the time of Hezekiah.

(*j*) xxxi. 10—31. The last portion of the book forms, more distinctly, perhaps, than any other, a complete whole in itself. From beginning to end there is but one subject, the delineation of a perfect wife; and it is alphabetic in its structure. The form may have been adopted, as in the case of the alphabetic psalms, partly as a help to memory, partly from the delight which, in certain stages, generally comparatively late, in the history of literature, is felt in choosing a structure which presents difficulties and requires ingenuity to overcome them. The absence of any historical allusions makes it impossible to fix any precise date for it. The assumption that the acrostic form is itself an evidence of a date as late as the seventh century is a somewhat arbitrary one, and involves our assigning Pss. xxv. and xxxiv. to the same periods. All that can be said is (1) that the Lamentations of Jeremiah indicate a preference for that form, as characteristic of the time immediately before the captivity, and (2) that as regards the order of two letters (ע and פ) it follows the received Hebrew alphabet, recognized in most of the acrostic psalms, and not that which we find in Lam. ii. iii. and iv.

II. *The Ethical Teaching of the Book of Proverbs.*

1. The teaching of individual proverbs will be discussed in the notes. What is aimed at here, is a statement of the principles on which that teaching rests, and of their application to the varying circumstances of life.

Whatever view we take of the structure and date of the book in its present form, it is clear that it belongs to a period when men had been taught to see more clearly than before the relative importance of the moral and the ceremonial precepts which seemed, in the Law of Moses, to stand on the same level as enjoined by divine authority. Language, such as we find in the teaching of Samuel (1 S. xv. 22), of Asaph (Ps. l. 13, 14), of David (Ps. li. 16, 17), had, we may well believe, impressed itself, through the schools of the Prophets, on the minds of the people at large, and was sure to leave its stamp on one who, like the writer of the book of Proverbs, had grown up under the immediate influence of the teacher (Nathan) who, after the death of Samuel, stood at the head of the prophetic order. The tendency to discriminate between what we have learnt to call moral and positive obligations thus originated, would be fostered, in the nature of things, by intercourse with other Semitic nations, such as Edom and Sheba, standing on the same footing as regards the fundamental principles of ethics, but not led, as Israel had been, through the discipline of typical or symbolic ordinances. If the book of Job was already known, or became known about this period, to the Israelite seekers after wisdom, the grandeur of its thoughts and the absence in it of any reference to the Law as such, would strengthen the conviction that instruction might be given, leading to a life of true wisdom and holiness and yet not including any direct reference to ceremonial or ritual precepts. It would not follow that these were slighted, or that men were taught to disobey them. They might safely be left to the traditions of household life, the example of parents, the teaching of priests and Levites. What a teacher such as

the writer of the book of Proverbs would aim at would be to lay the foundation of a godly life independently of them, and to exhibit that life in its completeness.

2. What has been said accounts for the absence from the Proverbs of all mention of obligations on which devout Israelites at all times must have laid stress, and to which Pharisaism in its later developments gave an exaggerated prominence. There is no reference to the law of the Sabbath, nor to the payment of tithes, nor to the observance of the Passover and other feasts. What is true of the book of Job, that, with the exception of the frequent occurrence of Jehovah as the distinctive name of God, it contains but little that would indicate any knowledge of the Law, or an Israelitish origin, is true, to nearly the same extent, here. Those who believe in a divine guidance as having determined the form and substance of each portion of the Divine Word, may reverently trace in this negative characteristic that which fitted the book to do a work which could not otherwise have been done so well, both for the education of Israel, and for that of mankind at large. The Jew was to be taught to recognize, in spite of all that kept him aloof from other races, a common ground on which he and they alike stood, in the law written in the hearts of all men, and was prepared to receive the teaching that the love of God and man was "more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices" (Mark xii. 33). The Greek, when the sacred books of Israel were brought before him in his own language, could find, in such a book as the Proverbs, that which he could better understand and sympathise with,—teaching as to life and its duties, vices and their penalties, not unlike that which he found in his own literature. It was significant of the attractive power which it exercised on the minds of men during the period between the Old and New Testaments, when there was no open vision, and the gift of prophecy was for a time withdrawn, that the two most prominent books in the collection which we know as the Apocrypha, the only two, indeed, that have a marked didactic character, the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus, were based upon its model, and to a large extent reproduced its precepts. The influence which, through the LXX. translation, it exercised on the thoughts and language of the writers of the New Testament will be discussed more at length in the third section of this Introduction.

3. The teaching of the book of Proverbs was, however, in its essence identical with that which formed the basis of the faith of Israel. Its morality was not merely the result of a wide observation of the consequences of good and evil conduct (though these are dwelt on with special fulness), such as the Greek found in Hesiod or Theognis, such as we find in the proverbs of Arabia, or the maxims of Confucius, but was essentially religious. The constant occurrence of the Divine Name in the form (that of Jehovah) which was the characteristic inheritance of Israel, and which meets us throughout the book with far greater frequency than that of God (*Elohim*), is in itself a sufficient proof that there was no surrender of the truth of which that Name was the symbol; and the acknowledgment of One Supreme Eternal Ruler, Who had made Himself known to men as their Father and their Judge, rewarding every man according to his works, and working out His purposes through the apparent disorders of the world, was made the one indispensable groundwork of all efforts after righteousness and knowledge. The fear of Jehovah (i. 7) stood in the very front of its teaching as the beginning of wisdom. The temper thus indicated, that of awe and reverence, rooted in the consciousness of man's littleness and weakness in the presence of the Eternal and the Infinite, was at once the motive and the crown (ii. 5) of the life of obedience to the laws of duty which the teaching of the book enjoins. His "curse" is the most terrible of all penalties, His "blessing" the highest of all rewards (iii. 33). While stress is laid on the fact that, in the long run, the order of His government attaches outward prosperity, "length of days" and "riches and honour" (iii. 16, x. 27), to those who keep His commandments, men are taught also that He educates and trains them in other ways, that there is a bless-

ing not to be despised in the "chastening" which He appoints, that His "correction," in whatever form it comes, is to be received as the indication of His love (iii. 11, 12), leading men on to a completeness to which they could not otherwise attain. All powers of intellect and speech, all efforts after holiness, are thought of as His gifts (xvi. 1, 9), even as men are taught to recognize His bounty in all the outward blessings of their lives, and in the family relationships which make up the happiness of home (xix. 14). When men are told to seek wisdom, they are led on in words which, though their full meaning was to be developed afterwards, were even then of priceless value, to think of it as no mere abstract quality, no aggregate of traditional knowledge, but as clothed with a personal life, in closest fellowship with the Eternal, inseparably One with Him (viii. 22, 30). And as the Wisdom which the book inculcates is thus raised far above the level of earthly prudence, so also the reward is more than the outward prosperity which, according to the general course of God's government, follows on uprightness and obedience. "Righteousness delivereth from death" (xi. 4), turns, *i.e.*, the inevitable end of life into an euthanasia. In contrast with the wicked, of whom it is true that "when he dieth his expectation shall perish" (xi. 7), it is written of the righteous that he "hath hope in his death" (xiv. 32). That hope is more than the confidence that it will be well with his children and those who come after him, and is as an "everlasting foundation" (x. 25).

4. The application of these principles to practical and social life presupposes a state of society in which the simplicity of village life is giving way to the sudden development of the wealth and luxury which belong to cities. The dangers against which the young are warned with oft-repeated earnestness are those of extravagance, indebtedness, drunkenness, impurity. The portraits of the harlot and the money-lender are drawn with a life-like accuracy (vi. 12—15, vii. 6—23). In a country only half-civilized, indulgence in the vices to which they tempted men led to yet more open lawlessness, and the life of the freebooter had attractions for the idle and foolish, which they were hardly able to resist (i. 10—19). Other faults incident to different temperaments, idleness (xv. 19, xix. 15, 24, xxiv. 30—34, xxvi. 13—16), pride (xvi. 18, xviii. 12), uncontrolled speech (x. 10, 19, xviii. 7), want of reverence for parents and for the aged (xiii. 1, xv. 5, xix. 26), are each, in their turn, held up to reprobation, and their features seen as in a mirror held up to nature. With the practical wisdom which is characteristic of the book, appealing, as it does, not only or chiefly to such as are already seeking the highest good, but to those that are halting between two opinions and inclining to the worse, stress is laid, in almost all these instances, not chiefly on the sin but on the folly of the vice, not on its eternal, but its temporal consequences. Men are urged to act first from secondary, prudential motives, to shun the poverty, wretchedness, ignominy, which are the consequences of self-indulgence, that so they may learn the habits of self-restraint which will make them capable of higher thoughts, and obedient to the Divine Law, as finding in that obedience itself their exceeding great reward[1]. The remedies for the evils which the writer or writers of the book of Proverbs saw thus growing up around them, were to be found, they saw no less clearly, in education. Individuals and nations alike needed discipline and restraint. The former found what they required in the training of home, in the counsels, warnings, and, if necessary, the chastisements also, by which the unruly will is checked and guided (i. 7, 8, iv. 20, 21, vi. 20, xix. 18, xxii. 6, 15, xxiii. 13, 14). The latter too needed restraint and guidance, and, from the point of view which the writer occupied, with no political theories of the rights of man, or representative government, the one safeguard against licence and disorder was to be found in the stern, inflexible, incorruptible administration of justice, and that administration called for the control of a wise and righteous king (xvi. 10, 12—14, xx. 8, 26, 28). The necessity of the personal government of such a ruler is assumed throughout, even while its risks are acknowledged freely (xxviii.

[1] Comp. Dr J. A. Hessey's Boyle Lectures 'On the Moral Difficulties of Scripture.'

15, 16, xxix. 4, xxxi. 5), and are met by earnest warnings against the temptations which attack kings no less than subjects (xxviii. 16, xxix. 12, xxxi. 4). Something may be done in resisting those temptations, if the king will not rely too much on his own unaided judgment, but will surround himself with wise and prudent counsellors (xxiv. 6), but here, more perhaps than in any other part of the book, the teacher has, at last, to fall back upon the truth that it is only by that wisdom, which is the gift of God, that "kings reign, and princes decree justice" (viii. 15).

5. No ethical manual would be complete, unless it assigned to woman, as well as man, her right position in the social order. From her folly (xi. 22) and degradation (ii. 16—19, v. 3—14, vii. 6—27), when she does but minister to the sensuality of man, spring, as has been seen, the worst evils. In her excellence is the crown and glory of a man's life (xi. 16, xii. 4). No picture of ideal happiness is brighter than that of a home which is thus made perfect with the clear brightness of true union (v. 15—20). The "prudent wife" is thought of as one of God's best gifts (xix. 14), "building her house" (xiv. 1) on the only true foundation. Her influence on her children is as great as that of their father, if not greater (i. 8, vi. 20). They owe what they have of goodness to her loving persuasion. Their sins and follies are a heaviness and reproach to her (x. 1, xvii. 25). They are bound to render to her a true and loving obedience (i. 8, vi. 20). The teaching on this subject culminates, it need hardly be said, in the last chapter, consisting as it does, (1) of prophecy or oracular speech as to the office of a king and the special temptations incident to it, which comes from one who was herself the mother of a king, and (2) of the picture of a perfect wife, wise, active, liberal, large-hearted, which is brought before us at the very close of the book, in the acrostic form most suited to impress it on the memory, as the ideal which the young man, seeking for the true blessedness of life, was to keep in view.

III. *The LXX. Version of the Book of Proverbs.*

1. The Greek version of this book presents some points of interest that seem to deserve a special consideration. What was true of the LXX. translation as a whole, that it seemed to bridge over the chasm that had divided the Jew from the Greek, holds good in a special degree of this part of it. In making that translation the Jew would have to familiarize himself with the terminology of Greek ethical writers, and to note, as far as he could, the precise equivalents for the attributes, moral and intellectual, of which the book treats so fully. In reading it the Greek would find himself, far more than he would in reading Law or Psalm or Prophet, in an atmosphere of thought not very different from his own native air. More than any other book it gave what the circumstances of the time required, a common ground on which the two could meet. The very words with which the Greek version of the book abounds, such as σοφία, φρόνησις, σύνεσις, δικαιοσύνη, were those which were echoing in every lecture-room in Alexandria. As the book itself, according to its traditional authorship, was the first-fruits of that largeness of heart, of which intercourse with other nations and familiarity with their modes of thought and speech were partly the consequence and partly, in their turn, the cause, so the translation tended to give prominence to that side of Judaism in which it presented itself to men, not as prophetic, typical, ceremonial, but wholly or chiefly as a monotheistic system of pure ethics.

2. One result of this was seen in the fact that, almost alone of the books of the Old Testament, it served as a model for the Hellenistic writers of the two centuries before Christ. Histories might be written, but they were poor reproductions of old materials, or were feeble and rhetorical in style. The voice of Prophecy was silent. That of Psalmists (even if we admit the existence of post-Maccabean psalms) was heard but seldom. But the influence of the chief Sapiential book of the Old Testament was seen in its being selected for imitation by those who had drunk, more or less deeply, of its spirit. The Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Sirach or the son of Sirach, probably also other lost books of the same kind, confessed in their very titles, yet more in their whole structure and

tone, that the Proverbs of Solomon, more particularly that the eighth chapter of that book, had left their stamp upon them. The singularly interesting Prologue to the latter book, in which the writer avows his conviction that "those who read the sacred Scriptures ought not only to be of good understanding themselves, but to be able also by speech and writing to be useful to those that are without," shews how much this line of teaching was looked upon as the true προπαιδεία by which the minds of the Gentiles were to be led to the faith of Israel.

3. The influences which were at work round Philo, his desire to bring the teaching of the Law into harmony with the terminology of Plato, led him to choose Λογος, rather than Σοφία, as the name of the creative Energy of which he thought as one with, and yet distinguishable from, the Divine Essence, but it is impossible to read the words in which Philo speaks of that Λόγος as μιμούμενος τὰς τοῦ πατρὸς ὁδοὺς, πρὸς παραδείγματα ἀρχέτυπα ἐκείνου βλέπων[1], without feeling that it would have been other than it is, had there not been before him the words in which Wisdom was personified, ὡς ἰσχυρὰ ἐποίει τὰ θεμέλια τῆς γῆς ἤμην παρ' αὐτῷ ἁρμόζουσα· ἐγὼ ἤμην ᾗ προσέχαιρεν, καθ' ἡμέραν δὲ εὐφραινόμην ἐν προσώπῳ αὐτοῦ ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ[2]. In whatever degree the connotation thus gained for the word which Philo chose prepared the way for the teaching of St John, we may trace, in the highest aspects of Christian theology, the influence of the vivid portraiture of the personified *Sophia* of the Proverbs. The phrases which came to express the eternal generation of the Λόγος as the μονογενὴς υἱὸς (John i. 14, 18), such, *e.g.*, as πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος, ἐν ἀρχῇ, were used of her. The doxology which ascribes to the Lamb that was slain πλοῦτον καὶ σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχὺν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν (Rev. v. 12) is all but an echo of the words in which Wisdom speaks of herself (ἐμὴ φρόνησις, ἐμὴ δὲ ἰσχὺς....πλοῦτος καὶ δόξα ἐμοὶ ὑπάρχει, viii. 14, 18). Even the ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν of John i. 14 can hardly be separated altogether (if we admit the general parallelism of the two lines of thought) from the ἐγὼ ἡ σοφία, κατεσκήνωσα βουλὴν καὶ γνῶσιν of Prov. viii. 12.

4. It lay in the nature of the case, both as to the thoughts of Philo, and yet more as to the higher teaching of St John, that, so far as the Divine Wisdom was personified, the masculine, not the feminine, word should gain the ascendancy. A system in which Σοφία had been the dominant word might have led to an earlier development of that attractive power of the "ever-feminine[3]" of which Mariolatry was a later growth, or might have become one in which, as in the Rabbinic exegesis of Prov. viii., Wisdom was identified with the Law given by Moses, and yet existing before the world was. The praises of Wisdom would have been in that case like those which Hooker utters of Law in its highest sense when he says that "her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world[4]."

5. An instance, hardly less striking, of the influence exercised by the teaching now before us is seen in the remarkable passage in Luke xi. 49. If, with many commentators, we think of our Lord as speaking, in words which, though mysterious, were intelligible to those who heard Him, of Himself as ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ that sent its prophets and apostles into the world and sent them in vain, then we have a direct indication that He sought to lead His disciples to identify Him with the personal Wisdom of whom such great things are said in Prov. viii., and who is represented as uttering a like complaint in Prov. i. 20—33. If, on the other hand, we adopt the less probable hypothesis that the Wisdom of God was the title of some lost book from which the words were quoted, we should then have grounds for inferring that the teaching of the book of Proverbs had impressed itself so deeply on the minds of the Jews of Palestine no less than on those of Alexandria as to give rise there also to a "Sapiential" literature in which Wisdom appeared as the sender of those Apostles and Prophets, on whom, as its foundation, the Church was to be built. If we take in the thought that our Lord's representations of His work, as

[1] Philo, 'De Conf. Ling.' III. 342.
[2] Prov. viii. 29, 30.
[3] "Das Immer-Weibliche zieht uns heran." Goethe, 'Faust,' Part II.
[4] 'Eccl. Pol.' I. ad fin.

they were determined, on one side, by the Messianic language of Isaiah, were influenced, on another, by the teaching of these two chapters, we may without rashness see in the invitation, *Ἔλθατε, φάγετε τῶν ἐμῶν ἄρτων, καὶ πίετε οἶνον ὃν ἐκέρασα ὑμῖν*, the source from whence flowed the deeper parable of John vi. and of the Last Supper,—in the "house" which Wisdom built, with its *στύλοι ἑπτά*, the starting-point of the thought that the Church is the "house of God" (1 Tim. iii. 15), "built" upon the rock (Matt. xvi. 18) of the Apostles as the *στύλοι* of that house (Gal. ii. 9; 1 Tim. iii. 15),—in the feast which she prepared, and to which *ἀπέστειλε τοὺς ἑαυτῆς δούλους*, that of the parable of the Wedding Feast.

6. The connection which has thus been traced throws, if I mistake not, a new light upon some other passages of the New Testament. It explains the stress which St Paul lays on the fact that Christ Jesus *ἐγενήθη ἡμῖν σοφία ἀπὸ θεοῦ* (1 Cor. i. 30), that He is *θεοῦ σοφία* (1 Cor. i. 24), that in Him are hid "all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge" (Col. ii. 3). Its influence on Patristic theology is shewn by the prominence given to Prov. viii. throughout the Arian controversy, by the hot debates upon the question whether the right rendering of קָנָנִי in *v.* 22 was *ἔκτισεν* or *ἐκτήσατο*[1]. Lastly we may note yet more remote after-growths of the Greek version of this book, in the Achamoth, or *Σοφία*, of the Gnostic systems of Basilides and Valentinus, in the church dedicated by Constantine to the Divine Wisdom, in the retention of that name by Justinian when he built the temple which, as the Mosque of Santa Sophia, still attracts the admiration of Christendom, and lastly, in the commonness of the personal name Sophia, the only one of its class that has become popular, while others, such as Irene, Agape, Pistis, Dikaiosyne, have fallen almost or altogether into oblivion.

7. The direct use of the book of Proverbs in the New Testament presents some peculiar features. Quotations from it are not very numerous. When they occur they are brought in, not with such words as *γέγραπται, ἡ γραφὴ λέγει*, or as coupled with the name of Solomon, but as current and familiar sayings, just in the way we might expect on the assumption that the book had been used generally in education and its maxims impressed upon the memory. In almost all cases the quotations are from the LXX. version, in some instances even where it differs widely from the Hebrew.

8. It will be worth while, as the circumstances just mentioned often hinder the quotations or allusive references from attracting the attention of the English reader, to present some, at least, of the more striking examples in parallel columns.

1. Prov. iii. 11, 12. *υἱέ, μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίου, μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος. ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος, ἐλέγχει, μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται.*	1. Heb. xii. 5, 6. *καὶ ἐκλέλησθε τῆς παρακλήσεως ἥτις ὑμῖν ὡς υἱοῖς διαλέγεται Υἱέ μου, μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίου, μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος· ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει, μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται.*
2. Prov. iii. 34. *κύριος ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσι χάριν.*	2. James iv. 6. *μείζονα δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν· διὸ λέγει Ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν.* Comp. also 1 Pet. v. 5.
3. Prov. iv. 26. *ὀρθὰς τροχιὰς ποίει σοῖς ποσί.*	3. Heb. xii. 13. *τροχιὰς ὀρθὰς ποιήσατε τοῖς ποσί.*
4. Prov. xi. 31. *εἰ ὁ μὲν δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ἀσεβὴς καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται;*	4. 1 Pet. iv. 18. *καὶ εἰ ὁ δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ἀσεβὴς καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται;*
5. Prov. xiii. 7. *εἰσὶν οἱ πλουτίζοντες ἑαυτοὺς μηδὲν ἔχοντες.*	5. 2 Cor. vi. 10. *ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.*
6. Prov. xxii. 8. *ἄνδρα ἱλαρὸν καὶ δότην εὐλογεῖ ὁ θεός.*	6. 2 Cor. ix. 7. *ἱλαρὸν γὰρ δότην ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεός.*

[1] See note in Commentary ad loc.

7. Prov. xxii. 8. ὁ σπείρων φαῦλα θερίσει κακά.	7. Gal. vi. 7. ὃ γὰρ ἐὰν σπείρῃ ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτο καὶ θερίσει.
8. Prov. xxiv. 21. φοβοῦ τὸν θεὸν, υἱὲ, καὶ βασιλέα.	8. 1 Pet. ii. 17. τὸν θεὸν φοβεῖσθε, τὸν βασιλέα τιμᾶτε.
9. Prov. xxv. 7. κρεῖσσον γάρ σοι τὸ ῥηθῆναι, Ἀνάβαινε πρὸς μέ.	9. Luke xiv. 10. Φίλε, προσανάβηθι ἀνώτερον.
10. Prov. xxv. 21. ἐὰν πεινᾷ ὁ ἐχθρός σου, ψώμιζε αὐτὸν, ἐὰν διψᾷ, πότιζε αὐτόν.	10. Rom. xii. 20. ἐὰν οὖν πεινᾷ ὁ ἐχθρός σου, ψώμιζε αὐτόν· ἐὰν διψᾷ, πότιζε αὐτόν· τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν ἄνθρακας πυρὸς σωρεύσεις ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ.
11. Prov. xxvi. 11. ὥσπερ κύων ὅταν ἐπέλθῃ ἐπὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἔμετον.	11. 2 Pet. ii. 22. Κύων ἐπιστρέψας ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον ἐξέραμα.
12. Prov. xxvii. 1. Μὴ καυχῶ τὰ εἰς αὔριον.	12. James iv. 14, 16. οὐκ ἐπίστασθε τὸ εἰς αὔριον......νῦν δὲ καυχᾶσθε ἐν ταῖς ἀλαζονείαις ὑμῶν.
13. Prov. xxx. 4 (xxiv. 27 in LXX.). τίς ἀνέβη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ κατέβη;	13. John iii. 13. οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, εἰ μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς.

9. The familiarity of the New Testament writers with the book is, however, shewn in other ways. Over and above their use of the same ethical terminology, σοφία, σύνεσις, φρόνησις, ἐπίγνωσις θεοῦ, αἴσθησις and the like, we trace its influence in their choice of a word which occupies a prominent position in the vocabulary of Christendom. The history of that word has, it is believed, a special interest. Every reader of the Proverbs is struck with the prophetic stress laid on the φόβος θεοῦ as the ἀρχὴ σοφίας, the groundwork of all virtues. It occurs thirteen times in that book, to say nothing of the parallel passages in Pss. xix. 9, xxxiv. 11, cxi. 10. We might have expected that we should find it not less prominent in the teaching of the New Testament. There, however, we find it but seldom: πορευόμεναι τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου Acts ix. 31; εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου 2 Cor. v. 11 (apparently, as the A.V. takes it, in a somewhat different and more objective sense); ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ 2 Cor. vii. 1; ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ Eph. v. 21.

10. It is not difficult to see why the old phrase was felt to be no longer adequate. In proportion as Κύριος came to be identified in men's minds with the Lord Jesus, and love in return for His love the one constraining motive, would there seem something harsh and jarring in a phrase which would come to them as equivalent to "the fear of Christ." Happily the LXX. version of the book of Proverbs supplied also the synonym that was needed. In Prov. i. 7, the first in which the phrase occurs, we find (as occurs not unfrequently elsewhere) an alternative rendering, standing in juxtaposition with the other, sc. εὐσέβεια εἰς θεὸν ἀρχὴ αἰσθήσεως. If we assume the order in which the books stand in the LXX. to be that in which they were translated, it was the first time that the word εὐσέβεια was used by them. It occurs also in Prov. xiii. 11[1], and in Isai. xi. 2, where also it stands together with an alternative rendering πνεῦμα φόβου θεοῦ. The substantive, and yet more the adjective εὐσεβής, occur with greater frequency in the Apocryphal books, especially in Ecclesiasticus. The way was thus prepared for the prominence which the word gains, just as the necessity was beginning to be felt, in the latest Epistles of the New Testament. It occurs ten times in the Pastoral Epistles of St Paul, four times in 2 Peter, Acts iii. 12 (where the A.V. gives "holiness") being the only other passage. The kindred word θεοσέβεια, from Job xxviii. 28, reappears in 1 Tim. ii. 10. The temper of devoutness, reverence, godliness, had taken the place in Christian terminology of the older "fear of the Lord."

11. It may be worth while to note

[1] Strangely enough it stands here for the Hebrew יָד (= hand) (ὁ δὲ συνάγων ἑαυτῷ μετ' εὐσεβείας πληθυνθήσεται), where the A.V. has "he that gathereth with labour." In this instance it may be looked on as an exegetic gloss upon the text.

some other words derived apparently from the LXX. version of this book, as occurring either only or chiefly in it, which enter into the vocabulary of the writers of the New Testament, such *e.g.* as

αἰνίγματα (1 Cor. xiii. 12; Prov. i. 6).
*ἀκαταστασία (Luke xxi. 9; 1 Cor. xiv. 33; 2 Cor. vi. 5, xii. 20; Prov. xxvi. 28).
*ἀσωτία and ἄσωτος (Luke xv. 13; Eph. v 18; Tit. i. 6; 1 Pet. iv. 4; Prov. vii. 11, xxviii. 7).
ἄτοπον (Luke xxiii. 41; Acts xxv. 5; Job iv. 8, xi. 11; Prov. xxx. 20).
*αὐτάρκης (Phil. iv. 11; Prov. xxx. 8).
βαλάντιον (Luke x. 4, xii. 33, xxii. 35, 36; Prov. i. 14).
*δεσπότης (for יהוה, Luke ii. 29; Acts iv. 24 et al.; Prov. xxix. 26).
*ἐναγκαλίζω (Mark ix. 36, x. 16; Prov. vi. 10, xxiv. 33).
*ἡ ἐπιοῦσα (Acts vii. 26, xvi. 11, et al.; Prov. iii. 28, xxvii. 1 et al.).
θησαυρίζω (used figuratively, Rom. ii. 5; Prov. i. 18, xvi. 27).
κατασπαταλάω (1 Tim. v. 6; James v. 5; Prov. xxix. 21).
κεκονιαμένοι (Matt. xxiii. 27; Acts xxiii. 3; Prov. xxi. 9).
*κυβέρνησις (1 Cor. xii. 28; Prov. i. 5, xi. 14, xx. 18, xxiv. 6).
λοιμός (as applied to persons, Acts xxiv. 5; Prov. xix. 25, xxi. 24 et al.).
μάχαιρα δίστομος (Heb. iv. 12; Prov. v. 4).
*μετάνοια (N.T. passim; Prov. xiv. 15).
μυκτηρίζω (Gal. vi. 7; Prov. i. 30 and six other passages).
*ὀρθοτομεῖν (2 Tim. ii. 15; Prov. iii. 6, xi. 5).
*παραρρύω (Heb. ii. 1; Prov. iii. 21).
παρρησία (N.T. in 31 passages; Prov. i. 20, xiii. 5).
περικάθαρμα (1 Cor. iv. 13; Prov. xxi. 18).
σινδών (Mark xiv. 51, 52 et al.; Prov. xxxi. 24).
συκοφαντῶ (Luke iii. 14, xix. 8; Prov. xiv. 31, xxii. 16, xxviii. 3).
ὑβριστής (Rom. i. 30; 1 Tim. i. 13; Prov. xv. 25, xvi. 19, xxvii. 13).

12. For the most part the choice of the Greek equivalents for the more prominent ethical or philosophical terms of the Proverbs is singularly felicitous. The history of the dominant word of the book (חָכְמָה, *Chochmah*, or more commonly in the plural, *Chochmoth*, Wisdom) is indeed almost an exact parallel to that of the Σοφία by which they rendered it. As used in the earlier books of the Old Testament (Exod. xxviii. 3, xxxv. 10, 31, 35, xxxvi. 1) it, or its cognate adjective, is applied to the wisdom of those who had the skill or art which was required for the ornamentation of the Tabernacle. We have traces of a higher application in Deut. iv. 6, xxxiv. 9. As used of the wisdom of Solomon in 1 Kings, and throughout in Job and the Psalms, as in the Proverbs, the higher prevails exclusively. So, in like manner, Aristotle ('Eth. Nicom.' VI. 6) describes the gradual elevation of the Greek σοφὸς, how it was first applied to sculptors like Pheidias and Polycleitos, how σοφία thus came to be known as ἀρετὴ τέχνης, then became equivalent to the highest accuracy in all things, and finally was thought of as οὐδεμίας γενέσεως, separated altogether from the idea of art-production. So too the use of φρόνησις for בִּינָה (*Bînah*) and תְּבוּנָה (*Tabunah*), looking to the etymology of the Hebrew as indicating the power which divides, discerns, distinguishes, and to Aristotle's account of φρόνησις as having for its chief office τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα γνωρίζειν ('Eth. Nicom.' VI. 7), has a special propriety. Their general choice of αἴσθησις rather than ἐπιστήμη, which might have seemed a more literal rendering of the Hebrew דַּעַת (*Da'ath*), shewed that they recognized the essentially practical character of the knowledge of which the Proverbs spoke, as perceiving the right thing to be done, and the right word to be said, in each detail of life. Σύνεσις, on the other hand, they employ less frequently, and then only as an equivalent, instead of φρόνησις, for בִּינָה, or once only, instead of αἴσθησις, for דַּעַת.

It would be out of place to attempt a minute examination of the version which we are now considering. It presents, however, some salient features sufficiently interesting to deserve notice.

(*a*) In not a few places it adds to the existing Hebrew, the addition sometimes having the character of an alternative rendering, sometimes consisting of entirely new matter. Of this the more striking instances are

* ἅπαξ λεγόμενα in the Old Testament.

(1) i. 7. εὐσέβεια δὲ εἰς θεὸν ἀρχὴ αἰσθήσεως.

(2) iv. 27. Ὁδοὺς γὰρ τὰς ἐκ δεξιῶν οἶδεν ὁ Θεός, διεστραμμέναι δέ εἰσιν αἱ ἐξ ἀριστερῶν· αὐτὸς δὲ ὀρθὰς ποιήσει τὰς τροχιάς σου, τὰς δὲ πορείας σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ προάξει.

(3) vi. 8. Ἢ πορεύθητι πρὸς τὴν μέλισσαν, καὶ μάθε ὡς ἐργάτις ἐστί, τήν τε ἐργασίαν ὡς σεμνὴν ἐμπορεύεται· ἧς τοὺς πόνους βασιλεῖς καὶ ἰδιῶται πρὸς ὑγίειαν φέρονται, ποθεινὴ δέ ἐστι πᾶσι καὶ ἐπίδοξος· καίπερ οὖσα τῇ ῥώμῃ ἀσθενής, τὴν σοφίαν τιμήσασα προήχθη.

(4) vii. 22. ἢ ὡς ἔλαφος τοξεύματι πεπληγὼς εἰς τὸ ἧπαρ.

(5) After ix. 12. Ὃς ἐρείδεται ἐπὶ ψεύδεσιν, οὗτος ποιμανεῖ ἀνέμους, ὁ δ᾽ αὐτὸς διώξεται ὄρνεα πετόμενα· ἀπέλειπε γὰρ ὁδοὺς τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ ἀμπελῶνος, τοὺς δὲ ἄξονας τοῦ ἰδίου γεωργίου πεπλάνηται· διαπορεύεται δὲ δι᾽ ἀνύδρου ἐρήμου, καὶ γῆν διατεταγμένην ἐν διψώδεσι, συνάγει δὲ χερσὶν ἀκαρπίαν.

(6) ix. ad fin. Ἀλλὰ ἀποπήδησον, μὴ ἐγχρονίσῃς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, μηδὲ ἐπιστῇς τὸ σὸν ὄμμα πρὸς αὐτήν· οὕτως γὰρ διαβήσῃ ὕδωρ ἀλλότριον, καὶ ὑπερβήσῃ ποταμὸν ἀλλότριον. Ἀπὸ δὲ ὕδατος ἀλλοτρίου ἀπόσχου, καὶ ἀπὸ πηγῆς ἀλλοτρίας μὴ πίῃς· ἵνα πολὺν ζήσῃς χρόνον, προστεθῇ δέ σοι ἔτη ζωῆς.

(7) xi. 14. πίπτουσιν ὥσπερ φύλλα.

(8) xvi. 5. Ἀρχὴ ὁδοῦ ἀγαθῆς τὸ ποιεῖν τὰ δίκαια, δεκτὰ δὲ παρὰ θεῷ μᾶλλον ἢ θύειν θυσίας· ὁ ζητῶν τὸν κύριον εὑρήσει γνῶσιν μετὰ δικαιοσύνης, οἱ δὲ ὀρθῶς ζητοῦντες αὐτὸν εὑρήσουσιν εἰρήνην.

(9) xviii. 8. (Substituted for the Hebrew.) Ὀκνηροὺς καταβάλλει φόβος· ψυχαὶ δὲ ἀνδρογύνων πεινάσουσιν.

(10) xix. 13. (Substituted for the Hebrew.) Οὐχ ἁγναὶ εὐχαὶ ἀπὸ μισθώματος ἑταίρας.

(11) xxiii. 31. Ἐὰν γὰρ εἰς τὰς φιάλας καὶ εἰς τὰ ποτήρια δῷς τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς σου, ὕστερον περιπατήσεις γυμνότερος ὑπέρου.

(12) xxiv. 21. Λόγον φυλασσόμενος υἱὸς, ἀπωλείας ἐκτὸς ἔσται· δεχόμενος δὲ ἐδέξατο αὐτόν. Μηδὲν ψεῦδος ἀπὸ γλώσσης βασιλέως λεγέσθω, καὶ οὐδὲν ψεῦδος ἀπὸ γλώσσης αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃ. Μάχαιρα γλῶσσα βασιλέως, καὶ οὐ σαρκίνη· ὃς δ᾽ ἂν παραδοθῇ, συντριβήσεται. Ἐὰν γὰρ ὀξυνθῇ ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ, σὺν νεύροις ἀνθρώπους ἀναλίσκει, καὶ ὀστᾶ ἀνθρώπων κατατρώγει, καὶ συγκαίει ὥσπερ φλὸξ, ὥστε ἄβρωτα εἶναι νεοσσοῖς ἀετῶν.

(13) xxvii. 16. (Substituted for the Hebrew.) Βορέας σκληρὸς ἄνεμος, ὀνόματι δὲ ἐπιδέξιος καλεῖται.

(14) xxx. 31. (Apparently as a paraphrase for the Hebrew.) Καὶ ἀλέκτωρ ἐμπεριπατῶν θηλείαις εὔψυχος.

(*b*) Sometimes the insertions or variations have the character of an exegetical gloss, toning down or making more explicit what might seem doubtful or misleading in the original. Of these the following are the most striking instances.

(1) i. 28. Ζητήσουσί με κακοί, καὶ οὐχ εὑρήσουσιν.

(2) ii. 16. Υἱὲ μή σε καταλάβῃ κακὴ βουλή.

(3) iii. 9. Τίμα τὸν κύριον ἀπὸ τῶν δικαίων πόνων.

(4) xiii. 11. ὁ δὲ συνάγων ἑαυτῷ μετ᾽ εὐσεβείας πληθυνθήσεται.

(5) xvi. 4. (As an alternative rendering.) Πάντα τὰ ἔργα κυρίου μετὰ δικαιοσύνης, φυλάσσεται δὲ ὁ ἀσεβὴς εἰς ἡμέραν κακήν.

(6) xvii. 1. Κρεῖσσον ψωμὸς μεθ᾽ ἡδονῆς ἐν εἰρήνῃ, ἢ οἶκος πλήρης πολλῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἀδίκων θυμάτων μετὰ μάχης.

(7) xxi. 9. Κρεῖσσον οἰκεῖν ἐπὶ γωνίας ὑπαίθρου, ἢ ἐν κεκονιαμένοις μετὰ ἀδικίας καὶ ἐν οἴκῳ κοινῷ.

(8) xxvii. 19. Ὥσπερ οὐχ ὅμοια πρόσωπα προσώποις, οὕτως οὐδὲ αἱ καρδίαι τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

(9) xxvii. 22. Ἐὰν μαστιγοῖς τὸν ἄφρονα ἐν μέσῳ συνεδρίῳ.

(10) xxx. 19. ὁδοὺς ἀνδρὸς ἐν νεότητι.

The arrangement of the closing chapters in the Greek version also presents striking peculiarities, the whole of ch. xxx. and xxxi. 1—9 being inserted after ch. xxiv. 22, as part of the same chapter, and the acrostic description of the true wife ending the book as ch. xxix. The most probable explanation of the transposition is that it originated in some accidental dislocation in the MS. from which the translation was made.

THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The use of the proverbs.* 7 *An exhortation to fear God, and believe his word.* 10 *To avoid the enticings of sinners.* 20 *Wisdom complaineth of her contempt.* 24 *She threateneth her contemners.*

THE proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and † equity;

4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and ‖ discretion.

† Heb. *equities.*

‖ Or, *advisement.*

CHAP. I. The long exhortation, characterized by the frequent recurrence of the words "My son," which extends over the first nine chapters, is obviously of the nature of a preface to the collection of the "Proverbs of Solomon" which begins in x. 1. Verses 1—6 are as the title-page to the whole work, setting forth its scope and nature; verse 7 as the motto, indicating the one great truth of which every precept in the book is either a reproduction or an application.

2. At the very outset the writer states his purpose; and we have in the statement that which marks the special character of the book. It is not a collection of popular proverbs, ranging over all regions of social or national life, such as may be found in ancient or modern books of a like nature. Of such proverbs there were many apparently current among the earlier Israelites. They are referred to in Num. xxi. 27: 1 S. xxiv. 13; 2 S. xx. 18. But the writer of this book has a distinct aim. His purpose is to educate. He is writing what, in modern language, we might call an ethical handbook for the young, though not for the young only. Of all books in the Old Testament this is the one which we may think of as most distinctively educational. A comparison of it with a like manual of later date, the 'Pirke Aboth,' 'Sayings of the Fathers,' in the Mishna, may help us to measure the difference between Scriptural and Rabbinic teaching.

wisdom] The first and highest of all the words which are heaped one upon the other to bring out the completeness of the book. Other words may remain as abstract terms. This passes on into a personification. The power by which human personality reaches its highest spiritual perfection, by which all lower elements are brought into harmony with the highest, can hardly be thought of as other than itself personal, life-giving, creative. Comp. notes on Job xxviii.

instruction] *i.e.* discipline or training, the practical complement of the more speculative wisdom.

understanding] The power of distinguishing, discerning right from wrong, truth from its counterfeit. The three words used by the LXX., σοφία, παιδεία, φρόνησις, express very happily the relation of those in the Heb. Comp. Aristot. 'Eth.' VI. 6.

3. *wisdom*] Not the same word as in *v.* 2, and better expressed, perhaps, by **thoughtfulness**, so leading naturally to words which are yet more decidedly ethical.

justice] The English word is perhaps somewhat too narrow in its received meaning for the Hebrew, which includes the ideas of truth and beneficence as well. **Righteousness** would be a better equivalent.

judgment] The word has its full meaning. The teaching of the Proverbs is to lead us to pass a right sentence upon human actions, whether our own or another's.

equity] In the Hebrew, as the marginal reading shews, the plural is used, and so expresses the many varying forms and phases of the one pervading principle.

4. The previous verses have described the ends aimed at. This points out the classes for which the book will be found useful. These are mainly two; (1) the *simple*, literally the "open," the open-hearted, the minds ready to receive impressions for good or evil, so exposed to the latter that the word for the most part is used as in *v.* 22, and elsewhere, with a shade of evil attaching to it; and (2) the *young*, those whose age places them for the most part under the category of the "open," and who, even if their will be stronger, still need both knowledge and discipline. To these the teacher offers what they most need, the

5 A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

6 To understand a proverb, and [1] the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

7 ¶ [a] The fear of the LORD *is* [1] the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

9 For they *shall be* [†] an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

10 ¶ My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

11 If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk

[1] Or, *an eloquent speech.*
[a] Job 28. 28. Ps. 111. 10. chap. 9. 10.
[1] Or, *the principal part.*
[†] Heb. *an adding.*

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subtlety, which may turn to evil (the "guile" of Exod. xxi. 14) and become as the wisdom of the serpent (Gen. iii. 1), but which also takes its place, as that wisdom does, among the highest moral gifts (Matt. x. 16): *knowledge* of good and evil, the *discretion* or **discernment**, which sets a man on his guard, and keeps him from being duped by false advisers. These the teacher offers, to save the simple and the young from the slower and more painful process of gaining them by a bitter experience. Here the LXX. renderings, *πανουργία* for "subtlety," *αἴσθησις* for "knowledge," *ἔννοια* for "discretion," are interesting as shewing the endeavour to find exact parallels for the Hebrew in the terminology of Greek ethics: *πανουργία*, used in earlier Greek writers for "craft" in a bad sense, occurs in Polybius (circ. B.C. 180) with the better meaning which the LXX. commonly gives to it.

5. But it is not for the young only that he writes. The simplest assertion of high moral truths may add something even to the wisdom of the wise. The *man of understanding* may gain *wise counsels*, literally, the power to *steer* his course rightly on the dangerous seas of life. The cognate word (חבל) is used in its literal sense in Ezek. xxvii. 8 for "pilot." The analogous metaphor implied in *κυβερνάω* (1 Cor. xii. 28) and *guberno* will occur to most readers. This "steersmanship," it may be noted, is a word almost peculiar to Proverbs (xi. 14, xii. 5, xxiv. 6). In Job xxxvii. 12, it is applied to the guidance, the *steering*, with which God directs the movement of the clouds of heaven.

6. The book has yet a further scope, expressed, as before, in parallel clauses. These proverbs are not merely to be learnt by rote; they are to form a habit of mind. To gain through them the power of entering into the deeper meaning of other proverbs, whether in their simpler form, or more enigmatic and obscure, is the end kept in view, just as our Lord's teaching in Matt. xiii. was designed to educate the disciples to "know all parables" (Mark iv. 13). The rendering *interpretation* spoils the parallelism of the two clauses, and fails to express the Hebrew. In Hab. ii. 6, the only other passage in which this word occurs, it is rendered "taunting proverb." Here "riddle" or "enigma" would better express the meaning.

7. This, "the fear of the Lord," as has been said, comes as the motto of the book. The beginning of wisdom is not found in keen insight, nor wide experience, nor the learning of the schools, but in the temper of reverence and awe. The fear of the finite in the presence of the Infinite, of the sinful in the presence of the Holy, self-abhorring, adoring, as in Job's confession (xlii. 5, 6), this for the Israelite was the starting-point of all true wisdom. What the precept, "Know thyself," was to the sage of Greece, that this law was for *him*. In the book of Job (xxviii. 28) it appears as an oracle accompanied by the noblest poetry. In Ps. cxi. 10 it comes as the choral close of a temple hymn. Here it is the watchword of a true ethical education. The fear of which the three writers speak is not the slave's dread of punishment. It has no "torment," and is compatible with child-like love. But this and not love is the "*beginning* of wisdom." Through successive stages and by the discipline of life, love blends with it and makes it perfect. It is interesting to note the twofold rendering of the LXX. (Ἀρχὴ σοφίας φόβος κυρίου. Εὐσέβεια δὲ εἰς θεὸν ἀρχὴ αἰσθήσεως), as indicating their sense of the depth and fulness of the original, which they could only express by combining what had been proposed as alternative translations.

8. Here with the words "My son" (words which, from this point, occur again and again as the commencement of a new section) the first direct counsel begins. The relation of the teacher to the taught is essentially fatherly.

9. To the Israelite's mind no signs or badges of joy or glory were higher in worth than the garland round the head, the gold chain round the neck, worn by kings and the favourites of kings (Gen. xli. 42; Dan. v. 29). The word meets us again in iv. 9.

10. From the broad general counsels the teacher passes to more specific warnings. The first great danger which besets the simple and the young is that of evil companionship. The only safety is to be found in the power of saying,—"No," to all such invitations, however enticing they may be.

privily for the innocent without cause:

12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

13 We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

15 My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

16 [b] For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

17 Surely in vain the net is spread † in the sight of any bird.

18 And they lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

19 So *are* the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

20 ¶ †[c] Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:

[b] Isai. 59. 7. Rom. 3. 15.

† Heb. *in the eyes of every thing that hath a wing.*

† Heb. *Wisdoms,* that is, *excellent wisdom.*

[c] chap. 8. 1.

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11. The warning as such is true for all times and countries, but has here a special application. The temptation against which the teacher seeks to guard his disciple is that of joining a band of highway robbers. At no period in its history has Palestine ever risen to the security of a well-ordered police-system; and the wild licence of the marauder's life attracted, we may well believe, many who were brought up in towns. The "vain men" who gathered round Jephthah (Judg. xi. 3), the lawless or discontented who came to David in Adullam (1 S. xxii. 2), the bands of robbers who infested every part of the country in the period of the New Testament, and against whom every Roman governor had to wage incessant war, shew how deeply rooted the evil was there. The story of St John and the young convert who became a robber, the most interesting of all Apostolic traditions, may serve as another illustration (Clem. Alex. 'Quis dives,' c. 24). The history of many countries (our own, *e.g.*, in the popular traditions of Robin Hood, and of Henry V.) presents like phenomena. The robber-life has attractions for the open-hearted and adventurous. No generation, perhaps no class, can afford to despise the warning against it. Comp. note on Ps. x. 7, 10.

without cause] The word thus rendered, but better translated **in vain**, goes, in the judgment of most modern commentators, not with "lay wait," but with "innocent," and receives its interpretation from the mocking question of the Tempter, "Doth Job fear God *for nought?*" (i. 9.) The evil-doers deride their victims as being righteous *gratis*, or "in vain." They get nothing by it. It does them no good. It would seem indeed as if the word was a common one in the mouths of scorners. If the righteous prospered they asked the question with a sneer. If they triumphed over him they used it in derision. The A. V. rendering is, however, supported by Hitzig.

12. The heart of the evil-doers becomes bolder: "We will be as Sheol, as Hades, as the great under-world of the dead, all-devouring, merciless. The destruction of those we attack shall be as sudden as that of those who go down quickly into Sheol" (Num. xvi. 30, 33). The word translated "whole" has a more distinctly moral meaning (comp. "integer vitæ"), and we may render the latter clause, **and upright men as those that go down to the pit.** So Luther, "die Frommen." (Comp. ii. 21.) The A. V. is supported, however, by Rosenmüller and Ewald. Pit, as here used, is of course a synonym for Sheol, the great cavernous depth, the shadow-world of the dead.

13, 14. The first form of temptation is addressed to simple lust of greed. The second, with a more subtle skill, appeals to something in itself nobler, however easily perverted. The main attraction of the robber-life is its wild communism, the sense of equal hazards and equal hopes. To have "one purse," setting laws of property at nought among themselves, seems almost a set-off against their attacks on the property of others.

17. Strictly speaking, the first proverb (*i.e.* similitude) in the book. Simple as the words appear, the proverb has received a variety of interpretations. (See Note below.) The true meaning seems to be as follows: "For in vain, to no purpose, is the net spread out openly. Clear as the warning is, it is in vain. The birds still fly in. So the great net of God's judgments is spread out, open to the eyes of all, and yet the doers of evil, wilfully blind, still rush into it." If we take the words as pointing to the failure of the plans of the evil-doers, we have a suggestive parallel in the Latin proverb,

"Quæ nimis apparent retia vitat avis."

The innocent will avoid, or escape the snare. The wicked will be taken in their own trap. The subtle irony of the teacher repeating the key-note of the mockers, "in vain," "for nought," is not to be passed over.

19. The lesson is generalized. Not robbery only, but all forms of covetousness are destructive of true life.

20. Another voice is heard. Wisdom is personified, and speaks, as it were, dramatically.

21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, *saying*,

22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

d Isai. 65. 12. & 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13. Ezek. 8. 18.

24 ¶ d Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

28 e Then shall they call upon me,

e Job 27. 9. Isai. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11 & 14. 12. Mic. 3. 4.

Perhaps the form of the substantive, perhaps some wide law of association connecting the purity and serenity of wisdom with the idea of womanhood, determines the character of the personification. In the Hebrew the noun is plural, as though this Wisdom were the queen of all wisdoms, uniting in herself all their excellences. She lifts up her voice "in the streets." Not in solitude, but in the haunts of men, through sages, and lawgivers, and teachers, and yet more through life and its experiences, she preaches to mankind. Something of the same kind was present, we may believe, to the mind of Socrates when he said that the fields and the trees taught him nothing, but that he found the wisdom he was seeking in his converse with the men whom he met as he walked in the streets and *agora* of Athens (Plato, 'Phædrus,' p. 230).

21. Words are heaped one upon the other to bring out the ubiquity of this teaching. "Without," sc. outside the walls, in the streets, at the highest point of all places of concourse (comp. the like phrase in Isai. li. 20; Lam. ii. 19), in the open space of the gates where the elders meet and the king sits in judgment, in the heart of the city itself, the same voice is heard uttering the same warning.

22. The three classes are addressed in a graduated scale like that of Ps. i. (1) The "simple," *open*, fatally open to evil; then (2) the "scorners," mocking at all good; lastly (3) the "fools" in the darker sense of the word, hardened, obstinate, perverse, hating the knowledge they have rejected.

23. The teaching of Divine Wisdom is essentially the same as that of the Divine Word (John vii. 38, 39). "Turning," repentance and conversion, this is what she calls the simple to. And the promise also is like His. Wisdom will "pour out" (the verb is connected with the root from which comes the word that we translate by "prophet," as meaning one who "pours forth" the Spirit he has received) her spirit. She makes this offer to the "rebellious." Even they, if they seek, shall find. Little as we might have expected it, the teaching of the book of Proverbs anticipates the prophecy of Joel (ii. 28), and the promise of our Lord. (John xiv. 26, xv. 26.) And with the spirit there are to be also the *words* of Wisdom. Not the *spirit* alone, with no articulate expression of truths perceived and felt, nor *words* alone, spoken or written, without the spirit to give them life, but both together, each doing its appointed work—this is the divine instrumentality for the education of such as will receive it.

24. The threats and warnings of Wisdom, no less than her promises, are foreshadowings of the teaching of the Incarnate Word. There will come a time when "too late" shall be written on all efforts, on all remorse. Here also we hear the "wailing and gnashing of teeth" of those upon whom the door is shut, and who remain in the outer darkness. Between the promise and threat there is, as it were, a pause. She waits, and no one listens, none accept her offer, and then the voice of pleading is changed into that of judgment.

26. Bold and terrible as the imagery is, it has its counterpart in the language of Ps. ii. 4. The scorn and derision with which men look on pride and malice, baffled and put to shame, has something that answers to it in the Divine Judgment. There is, as has been said, a divine irony in the Nemesis of History. It is, however, significant that in the fuller revelation of the mind and will of the Father in the person of the Son no such language meets us. Sadness, sternness, severity, there may be, but, from first to last, no word of mere derision.

27, 28. *desolation*] Better perhaps **tempest**. Comp. Zeph. i. 15. The rapid gathering of the clouds, the rushing of the mighty winds (comp. Job i. 16, 19), are the fittest types of the suddenness with which in the end the judgment of God shall fall on those who look not for it. Here also the parallelism which we have traced

but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

32 For the [1] turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

[1] Or, *ease of the simple.*

33 But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

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before holds good. The "coming of the Son of Man" shall be as "the lightning" in its instantaneous flashing seen from the one end of heaven to the other. And at that coming He too will have to utter the same doom. "Many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able."

29, 30. Yet there is no arbitrary sentence. The fault was all along their own. They rejected the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, and therefore Wisdom rejects them. They eat the fruit of their own ways, and that fruit is death.

32. *turning*] The word is clearly used with a grave irony. Wisdom had called the simple to *turn*, and they had turned, but it was *away* from her. The marginal "*ease*" does not rest on any good authority. For "prosperity" in the latter clause, which the A. V. has adopted from the Vulg., we might better read **carelessness**, the false security of Job iii. 26, or "ease." Not outward prosperity, but the temper which it too often produces, the easy-going indifference to higher truths, is that which destroys.

33. Contrasted with the false indifference, the counterfeit ease, is the true *security*, in the strict sense of the word, which comes from wisdom only and is the same as safety.

NOTE on CHAP. I. 17.

The difficulty of the verse lies, as in *v.* 11, in the application of the word חִנָּם, "in vain," "to no purpose." The view given in the text, supported by Rosenmüller, Umbreit, Hitzig, sees in the birds the counterpart of the "simple," who are being led on to evil, and assumes that, however clear and open the net may be, the birds will yet fly into it. Even so, clear as the destruction is into which they hasten, the tempted rush into it, and the tempters too are taken in their snare. On the other interpretation, adopted by Bertheau and Maurer, the "bird" is the innocent man against whom the wicked plot. Their plans are too patent, and as the bird avoids the net which is not concealed, so he escapes. As far as he is concerned, they have spread their net "in vain." A third interpretation takes the words "in the eyes of" as meaning "in the judgment of." The bird thinks it will escape, yet is taken. The young man thinks that he at least shall not fall into the snares laid for him, and so goes blindly into them.

CHAPTER II.

1 *Wisdom promiseth godliness to her children,* 10 *and safety from evil company,* 20 *and direction in good ways.*

MY son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;

2 So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* † liftest up thy voice for understanding;

† Heb. *givest thy voice.*

4 [a] If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures;

[a] Matth. 13. 44.

CHAP. II. Threatenings have come first, for "the *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Then in the divine order come the promise and the conditions of its fulfilment. The latter are stated in *vv.* 1—4 in four sets of parallel clauses, each with some shade of distinct meaning. Not "receiving" only, but "hiding" or treasuring up—not the "ear" only, but the "heart"—not the mere "cry," but the eager lifting up the voice.

4. The illustrations here have a fresh interest. (1) Contact with Phœnician commerce, joint expeditions in ships of Tarshish going to Ophir for gold, or to Tarshish itself for silver, and tin, and copper (see note on 1 K. x. 11,

5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

6 [b] For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding.

b James 1. 5. 1 Kings 3. 9.

7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

10 ¶ When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

11 Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

12 To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that speaketh froward things;

13 Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

14 Who rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

15 Whose ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths:

16 To deliver thee from the strange

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22), had made the Israelites familiar with the risks and the enterprise of the miner's life. Already in the book of Job, in the chapter which furnishes the motto of the Proverbs (Prov. i. 7; Job xxviii. 28), the analogy had been brought out in all its beauty and fulness. The eager watching for the first signs of the precious ore, the careful tracking of the vein, the joy at the discovery, these were all parables of the true search after wisdom. In Greek the parable embodied itself in a word, and the very word "metal" implies that it is the object of the closest and most anxious search, while from it again comes the verb μεταλλεύω for a searching, exploring inquiry: "I seek as a man seeks metal." (2) The imagery of the second clause presents a fresh aspect of the search. Not the silver in the mine, but the treasure hid in a field, is the point of comparison. Such treasure-seeking has always been characteristic of the East. The absence of a settled order leads to hoarding, wars and invasions to hiding (cf. Jer. xli. 8), some lucky "finds" excite men's imagination, and treasure-seeking becomes a mania. Men devote their lives to it. Our Lord, it will be remembered, adopts the same similitude (Matt. xiii. 44), laying stress, however, on the joy of a seemingly casual discovery, rather than on the long seeking.

5. *the fear of the LORD*] That which impels men to the pursuit is also itself the prize which rewards them. The highest blessedness is to know God (John xvii. 2). If any distinction between Jehovah and Elohim can be pressed here, it is that in the former the personality, in the latter the glory, of the Divine Nature is prominent.

6. Men are to remember as they seek for wisdom, not only that "the fear of the Lord" is the way to it, but that He is also the Giver. They do not gain it by any efforts of their own, but He gives it according to the laws of His own goodness.

7. *sound wisdom*] The primary idea of the Heb. word seems to be that of "soundness," which passes on into that of health and safety. This probably was what the translators intended to convey: comp. their use of "*sound* doctrine" in the N. T. (1 Tim. i. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 3), as the equivalent of ὑγιαίνουσα, *healthy*. Comp. notes on Job v. 12, vi. 13.

8. *saints*] The devout and God-fearing. Comp. Ps. lxxxv. 8, cxlviii. 14, cxlix. 9. The occurrence of the word here, in a book that became more and more prominent as prophetic utterances ceased, probably helped to determine its application in the period of the Maccabean struggles to those who specially claimed for themselves the title of "devout." So the חסידים (*Chasidim*) appeared in Greek in the form Ἀσιδαῖοι (1 Macc. ii. 42, vii. 13).

9. The opening word shews that this verse is parallel to *v.* 5, summing up in a few short words the reward of the righteous. Both passages express the same great truth. Righteousness is itself the "exceeding great reward" of those who seek it.

10. Another picture of the results of living in the fear of the Lord. Not that only to which it leads a man, but that from which it saves him, must be brought into view. Here, as before, there is a gradation in the two clauses. It is one thing for wisdom to find entrance into the soul, another to be welcomed as a "pleasant guest."

12—15. The evil-doers are described more generically than in i. 10, 16. They include not robbers and murderers only, but all who leave the straight path and the open day for crooked ways, perverse counsels, deeds of darkness. "To delight in the frowardness of

woman, [c]*even* from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words;

17 Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.

18 For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.

19 None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.

20 That thou mayest walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous.

21 [d]For the upright shall dwell

[d] Ps. 37. 29.

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the wicked" (*v.* 14) is, as in Ps. l. 18, and Rom. i. 32, the lowest depth of all.

16. The second great evil which besets the young man's path is now brought into view, and the warnings against it are frequent, and loud, and long (v. 3—20, vi. 24—35, vii. 6—27, ix. 13—18). It may be well to notice the special features which belonged to it, as it met the eyes of the preacher in Jerusalem. Two words are used to describe the class. (1) זרה (*Zarah*), "The strange woman." (2) נכריה (*Nokriyah*), "The stranger." The primary idea of the Heb. in (1) is that of one who does not belong to the family. Comp. Prov. v. 10; Deut. xxv. 5; Job xv. 19. The "strange woman" *may* mean simply the adulteress, as the "strange gods," the "strangers" (Deut. xxxii. 16; Jer. iii. 13), are those to whom Israel, forsaking her true husband, offered an adulterous worship. But in both cases there is implied also some idea of a foreign origin, as of one who by birth is outside the covenant of Israel. In (2) this meaning is still stronger. The stranger is none other than a foreigner, as the "*strange* vine" of Jer. ii. 21 is that which belongs to another country. It is the word used of the "strange" wives of Solomon (1 K. xi. 1, 8), and of those of the Jews who returned from Babylon (Ezra x. *passim*), of Ruth, as a Moabitess (Ruth ii. 10), of heathen invaders (Isai. ii. 6). The two words together, in connection with those which follow, and which imply at once marriage and a profession of religious faith, point to some interesting facts in the social history of Israel. Whatever form the sin here referred to had assumed before the monarchy (and the book of Judges testifies to its frequency), the intercourse with Phœnicians and other nations under Solomon had a strong tendency to increase it. The king's example would naturally be followed, and it probably became a fashion to have *foreign* wives and concubines. At first, it would seem, this was accompanied by some show of proselytism (*v.* 17). The women made a profession of conformity to the religion of their masters. But the old heathen leaven breaks out. They sin and "forget the covenant of their God." The worship of other gods, a worship in itself sensual and ending in the foulest sin, leads the way to a life of harlotry. Other causes may have contributed to the same result. The stringent laws of the Mosaic code (Lev. xix. 29, xxi. 9; Deut. xxiii. 18) may have deterred the women of Israel from that sin, and led to a higher standard of purity than prevailed among other nations. Zidonian and Tyrian women came, like the Asiatic hetæræ at Athens, at once with greater importunity and with new arts and fascinations to which the home-born were strangers.

Such, it is believed, is the true interpretation of the facts. It has the support of Umbreit and Vaihinger in their commentaries, and of Fritzsche, in a treatise 'De muliere peregrinâ.' The Roman use of "peregrinæ," as identical with "meretrices" (Terent. 'Andr.' I. i. 119), may be noticed as a parallel both in phrase and fact. Most interpreters (Rosenmüller, Ewald, Hitzig, Bertheau) have, however, generalized the words as speaking of any adulteress. The LXX., as if reluctant to speak of facts so shameful, has at once allegorized them, and seen in the temptress the personification of "evil counsel."

17. *the guide of her youth*] Better (as the word is rendered in xvi. 28, xvii. 9, the primary idea being that of "attachment," not "guidance") **the familiar friend.** The "friend" is, of course, the husband, or the man to whom the strange woman first belonged as a recognized concubine. The special meaning of the phrase is seen in Jer. iii. 4, where it is put into the mouth of an adulteress returning to her husband.

the covenant of her God] The sin of the adulteress is not against man only but against the law of God, against His covenant. In her "covenant" with man, she was entering into a compact with God, in Whose presence it was made. The words point to some religious formula of espousals. Comp. Mal. ii. 14.

18. The veil is drawn away and the hideous truth disclosed. The house of the adulteress is as Hades, the realm of death, haunted by the spectral shadows of the dead (*Rephaim*, as in Isai. xiv. 9; Ps. lxxxviii. 11 and elsewhere), who have perished there.

19. The words describe more than the fatal persistency of the sinful habit when once formed. They continue the image of the previous verse. Here also there is "a bourne from which no traveller returns." A resurrection from that world of the dead to "the paths of life" is all but impossible.

in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

22 [e] But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be [1] rooted out of it.

e Job 18. 17. Ps. 104. 35. 1 Or, plucked up.

CHAPTER III.

1 An exhortation to obedience, 5 to faith, 7 to mortification, 9 to devotion, 11 to patience. 13 The happy gain of wisdom. 19 The power, 21 and the benefits of wisdom. 27 An exhortation to charitableness, 30 peaceableness, 31 and contentedness. 33 The cursed state of the wicked.

MY son, forget not my law; [a] but let thine heart keep my commandments:

a Deut. 8. 1. & 30. 16.

2 For length of days, and [†] long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

† Heb. years of life.

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: [b] bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

b Exod. 13. 9. Deut. 6. 8.

4 [c] So shalt thou find favour and [1] good understanding in the sight of God and man.

c Ps. 111. 10. 1 Or, good success.

5 ¶ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 [d] In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

d 1 Chron. 28. 9.

7 ¶ [e] Be not wise in thine own

e Rom. 12. 16.

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20. The counsel passes from the special to the general. The picture of shame and sin is brought before the disciple as an incentive to a better course. If evil companionship is so fatal, seek the fellowship of the good.

21, 22. Noticeable here is the Hebrew love of home, love of country. To "dwell in the land," is, as in Exod. xx. 12; Levit. xxv. 18, xxvi. 5; cf. 2 K. iv. 13, the highest blessing for the whole people and for individual men. In contrast with it is the life of the sinner cut off from the **land** of his fathers. The word rendered "earth" is the same as in the first clause, and ought obviously to have the same equivalent in English.

CHAP. III. Read in continuous chapters, there seems in what now meets us something of repetition. Looked at as a book for the education of the young, we may see in each section a "counsel" to be learnt and remembered, day by day, so as to form a habit of mind by the frequent recurrence of the same impressions.

2. The three words carry on the chain of blessings. (1) Length of days, simple *duration* of life, in itself to the Jewish mind a great gift of God. (2) "Years of *life*," *i.e.* of a life truly such, a life worth living, not the lingering struggle with pain and sickness (comp. the use of "life" in Ps. xxx. 5, xlii. 8). (3) The one word which has always been foremost in all Hebrew benedictions, "peace;" tranquillity inward and outward, the serenity of life continuing through old age till death. It has sometimes been said, with a false antithesis, that "prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity the blessing of the New" (Bacon, 'Essays,' *Of Adversity*), and words like these seem at first to confirm the *dictum*. Under both dispensations, however, there has been the same admixture of good and evil. The complaints of Job, of Asaph (Ps. lxxiii.), of the Preacher (Eccles. ix. 2), shew that there was no difference in the providential order of the world before and after the coming of our Lord. St Paul's assertion in the midst of all his sufferings is still, as of old, that "Godliness hath the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come." (1 Tim. iv. 8.)

3. The two elements of a morally perfect character. (1) "Mercy," shutting out all forms of selfishness and hate. (2) "Truth," shutting out all deliberate falsehood, all hypocrisy, conscious or unconscious. The words that follow may possibly refer to the Eastern custom of writing sacred names on pieces of papyrus or parchment, and wearing them as amulets round the neck, charms and talismans against evil. (So Umbreit and Vaihinger.) The teacher says in effect, "He who has mercy and truth needs no other talisman," but then they must be written, not as the charm worn (as, *e.g.*, the Egyptian scarabæus was worn) outside the heart, but on the tablets of the heart itself. The explanation of most commentators that "mercy" and "truth" are spoken of as the truest "ornaments" is, however, adequate. Comp. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

4. *favour and good understanding*] (Not, as in the margin, "good success.") The two conditions, as in Luke ii. 52, of true human growth, the grace that wins and attracts, the mind which is firm and well-balanced, known to Him who sees in secret, recognized also by the outer world.

5. The moralist does not lose sight of the ground of all morality, and in preaching this "trust in God," anticipates the teaching that man is justified by faith. In this trust in a Will, supreme, righteous, loving, was the secret of all true greatness. To confide in that Will is to rise out of all the anxieties and plans and fears which surround us when we think of ourselves as the arbiters of our own fortunes, and so "lean to our own understanding."

eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It shall be † health to thy navel, and † marrow to thy bones.

9 [f] Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

10 [g] So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 ¶ [h] My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

13 ¶ Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and † the man *that* getteth understanding.

14 [i] For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

ine. ing, nist- i. 23. 14. 26. 26. Mal. &c. 14. ii. 28. 5. 17. 12. 5. 3. 19.

† Heb. *the man that draweth out understanding.* [i] Job 28. 15, &c. Ps. 19. 10. chap. 8. 11, 19. & 16. 16

6. The thought or knowledge is to pervade the whole life. Not in acts of solemn worship or great crises only, but "in *all* thy ways;" and then He will "direct thy paths," make them straight, and even, and prosperous.

7. The great hindrance to all true wisdom is the thought that we have already attained it.

8. *navel*] The central region of the body is taken as the representative of all the vital organs. Strange as it may sound to our ears, it is well to remember that the "heart," which poetry and rhetoric now recognize as the one bodily emblem of the soul, came to be so received in the same way, and stood at one time on the same level. For "health" we should read **healing**, or, as in the marg., "medicine." There is probably a reference to the local applications used by the surgery of the period as means of healing.

9. Of the two clauses of the verse, "substance" points to "capital," "increase," of course, to "revenue." The LXX., as if anxious to guard against the tendency to look on the offerings of ill-gotten gains as an atonement for the ill-getting, inserts the qualifying words, "honour the Lord from thy *righteous* labours," and so in the following clause. The New Testament reader will call to mind like insertions in the later text of Matt. v. 11, 22, vi. 4.

10. The promise is an echo of the sense, almost of the words, of Deut. xxviii. 1—8; yet the close juxtaposition of *v.* 11 shews that this fulness of outward blessings did not exclude the thought of the "chastening," without which the discipline of life would be incomplete. "Presses," literally the vats, the *lacus* of a Roman vineyard, into which the wine flowed through a pipe from the winepress. Comp. Isai. v. 2; Judg. vi. 11; Matt. xxi. 33.

11. The temper described by the two Hebrew verbs is rather that of disgust and loathing than contempt. To struggle impatiently, to fret and chafe, when suffering comes on us, is the danger to which we are exposed when we do not accept it as from the hands of God. Jonah's "great anger" (iv. 9), Job's bitter complaints, may be taken as examples of such a temper.

12. It is well to note the first distinct utterance of a truth which has been so full of comfort to many thousands, the summing-up of all controversies, like those of Job's friends (Job v. 17), or Our Lord's disciples (John ix. 2), as to the mystery of suffering. To see that it is no proof of the wrath of God, that it is even among the signs and tokens of a love which ordereth all things well, this is what the writer of this portion of the Proverbs was taught to see. It was the lesson which the book of Job had proclaimed as the issue of many perplexities. Here it enters into the education of every Jewish child taught to acknowledge another Father in Heaven chastising him, even as he has been chastised by his earthly father. The Apostle writing to the Hebrews can find no stronger comfort (Heb. xii. 6). The Church, in her Visitation Service, has no truer message for the sufferer.

13. The first beatitude of the Proverbs introduces a new lesson. The scholar is taught to sing the praise of wisdom, and we have once again an echo of the poetry of Job xxviii. "Getteth understanding," literally (as in the margin) **draweth forth**; and hence open to a slight ambiguity. It may mean either (1) "draws forth from his own store," gives freely what he has received freely, or (2) (as in viii. 35, xviii. 22) "draws forth from God's store, from the experience of life." The latter sense suits better with the context, and with the parallelism of the two clauses. What is dwelt on here is the preciousness of wisdom, not the use to be made of it.

14. Here, as in ii. 4, we have traces of the new commerce, the ships going to Ophir for gold, the sight of the bright treasures stimulating men's minds to a new eagerness. The word translated "fine gold" is apparently a technical word of this commerce, the native gold in the nugget or the dust.

15 She *is* more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 Length of days *is* in her right hand; *and* in her left hand riches and honour.

17 Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness, and all her paths *are* peace.

18 She *is* a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy *is every one* that retaineth her.

19 The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he [1] established the heavens.

[1] Or, *prepared*.

20 By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

21 ¶ My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:

22 So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.

23 [k] Then shalt thou walk in thy

[k] Ps. 37. 24. & 91. 11.

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15. *rubies*] Here, again, we have another word of like nature, the meaning of which we can only conjecture. The two facts that we know are (1) that the *peninim* were among the costly articles of traffic, and (2) that they were red, or rose-coloured (Lam. iv. 7). The last fact has led some to identify them with coral, and probably influenced the A. V. in its choice of "rubies," here, and elsewhere. Most commentators, however, have identified them with pearls. The fact that they are so taken in the Jerusalem Targum seems to connect this passage with our Lord's parable in Matt. xiii. 45, and the like imagery in Matt. vii. 6.

As in the vision of Solomon at Gibeon, so here; Wisdom, being chosen, does not come alone, but brings with her the gifts which others who do not choose wisdom seek in vain. The words of the promise are almost the echo of those in 1 K. iii. 11—13.

17. It adds somewhat to the vividness of the imagery to remember that the two words "ways" and "paths" describe the two kinds of roads, the "highway" and the "byway." In both these he who was guided by Wisdom would walk securely.

18. The reference to the history of Gen. ii. iii. is unmistakeable. It is remarkable that this and the other references in Proverbs (xi. 30, xiii. 12, xv. 4) are the only allusions in any book of the Old Testament, after Genesis, to the "tree" itself, or to its spiritual significance. Nearly as remarkable is the tendency to a half-allegorizing application of that history. "The tree of life" which Adam was not to taste lies open to his children. No cherubim with flaming swords bar the approach. Wisdom is the "tree of life," giving a true immortality. The symbol entered largely into the religious imagery of Assyria, Egypt, and Persia. It was not strange, after this suggestive hint, that Philo ('Allegor.' p. 34), going a step further, should find in the two trees the ideal representatives of speculative knowledge and moral wisdom, or that the same image should be made to subserve a higher purpose in the promises and the visions of Rev. ii. 7, and xxii. 2. Comp. notes on Gen. ii. iii.

19. Hitherto Wisdom has been thought of in relation to men. Now the question comes, What is she in relation to God? and the answer is, that the creative act implies a Divine Wisdom, through which the Divine Will acts. We have, as it were, the germ of the thought developed in ch. viii., the first link in the chain which connects this "Wisdom" with the Divine Word, the LOGOS of St John's gospel. What is here attributed to her, is in Ps. xxxiii. 6 ascribed to "The Word of Jehovah," to "the breath or spirit of His mouth." So St John asserts of the Word, "by Him," *i.e.* through Him, all things came into being (John i. 3). The words of the writer of the Proverbs take their place among the proofs of the dogmatic statements of the Nicene Creed.

20. Another trace of the impression made by Gen. i. 7, vii. 11, or Job xxxviii. Looking upon the face of Nature, men see, as it were, two storehouses of the living water, without which it would be waste and barren. There are the abysses, the great deep, as in Gen. i. 2. There is the wide ethereal sky, with its mists and clouds. From the one rush forth the surging waves, when the fountains of the depths are "broken up" (Gen. vii. 11), from the other falls the gentle rain or "dew;" but both alike are ordered by the Divine Wisdom.

21. The first hymn in honour of that Wisdom is brought to an end, to be resumed and expanded afterwards in ch. viii. "Let not them depart:" sc. the wisdom and discretion of the following clause. Keep thine eye on them, as one who watches over priceless treasures.

22. Once again, and nearly in the same words as in i. 9, Wisdom appears as the source of all serenity and peace, "grace" here being equivalent to "the ornament of grace" there.

way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

24 When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

25 Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.

26 For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

27 ¶ Withhold not good from † them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do *it*.

28 Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

29 † Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.

30 ¶ Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

31 ¶ [l] Envy thou not † the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

32 For the froward *is* abomination to the LORD: [m] but his secret *is* with the righteous.

33 ¶ [n] The curse of the LORD *is* in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.

34 [o] Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

35 The wise shall inherit glory: but shame † shall be the promotion of fools.

[l] Ps. 37. 1 † Heb. *a man of violence.* [m] Ps. 25. 14. [n] Mal. 2. 2 [o] Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5. † Heb. *exalteth the fools.*

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24. *thy sleep shall be sweet*] The highest expression for undisturbed tranquillity. Comp. Jer. xxxi. 26; Ps. cxxvii. 2.

25. Under the form of this strong prohibition there is of course an equally strong promise. So safe will all thy ways be that to fear will be a sin. Comp. the "*Impavidum* ferient ruinæ" of Horace ('Od.' III. iii. 8).

27. From this verse to the end of the chapter there is a marked change in style. The continuous exhortation ceases; and we have a series of maxims resembling those with which ch. x. commences.

from them to whom it is due] Lit. "from the lords or owners of it." At first the precept might seem to enjoin honesty, as seen, *e.g.*, in the payment of debts or wages, rather than beneficence. Probably, however, it expresses, in this bold form of speech, the great scriptural thought that the so-called possession of wealth is but a stewardship; that the true owners of what we call our own are those to whom, with it, we may do good. Not to relieve them is a breach of trust. So the LXX. (which gives ἐνδεῆ) and most commentators.

28. Procrastination, fatal in all things, is specially fatal to the giving impulse. "When thou hast it by thee." The LXX. adds the caution, "for thou knowest not what the morrow will bring forth." The proverbs, "Bis dat qui cito dat," "ingratum est beneficium, quod diu inter manus dantis hæsit" (Seneca), may be cited as illustrations.

29. *securely*] In the older and truer sense of the word, not as synonymous with safety, but "with full trust," without care or suspicion. Comp. the description of the people of Laish as being "quiet and secure" (Judg. xviii. 7, 27).

31. *Envy thou not*] The verse is a protest against the tendency to worship success, to think the lot of the "man of violence" an enviable one, and therefore to be chosen.

32. The veil is drawn aside and the true nature of such success brought to view. That which men admire is to Jehovah an abomination. His "secret," sc. his close, intimate communion as of "friend with friend," is with the righteous. Comp. the use of the same word in Ps. xxv. 14.

33. The thought, like that which appears in Zech. v. 3, 4, and pervades the tragedies of Greek drama, is of a curse, an Atè, dwelling in a house from generation to generation (comp. Æschyl. 'Agam.' 740), the source of ever-recurring woes. "House," and "habitation." There is, possibly, a contrast between the "house" or "palace" of the rich oppressor and the lowly shepherd's hut, the "sheep-cote" (2 S. vii. 8) ennobled only by its upright inhabitants. So the LXX. gives ἐπαύλεις. Taking this view we find another suggestive parallel in Æschyl. 'Agam.' 745—750.

34. *Surely*] Better (with nearly all commentators) **If**, as elsewhere. **If he scorneth the scorners**, sc. the divine scorn of evil is the complement, and, as it were, the condition, of the divine bounty to the lowly. In its Greek form the verse meets us in James iv. 6, and 1 Pet. v. 5. Once again, here personally of Jehovah, as in i. 26 of Wisdom, we have the thought of a derision, a "scorn of scorn," compatible with, perhaps essential to, the highest conceivable excellence.

35. Something of this derision shews itself

in the irony of the words that follow. The marg. "Shame exalteth the fools" conveys the thought that they glory in that which is indeed their shame. Others take the clause as meaning "every fool takes up shame," *i.e.*, gains that and nothing but that. See Note below.

NOTE on CHAP. III. 35.

The difficulty of the verse turns upon the word מרים, the Hiph. part. sing. of the verb רום. Two questions present themselves. Is it, as the concord requires, (1) the predicate of קלון (shame), or (2) may we assume an enallage of number, the plural of the subject being individualized in the predicate, as *e.g.* in *v.* 18? In either case, in what sense is the literal meaning of the verb ("to make high, to lift up") to be applied? We have under this double element of doubt, as might be expected, a great variety of interpretations:

1. a. Shame lifts up, sc. sweeps away, fools. Ben Gersom, Umbreit, Bertheau. (Comp. this use of the verb in Isai. lvii. 14; Ezek. xxi. 26.)

1. b. Shame exalts fools, *i.e.* makes them conspicuous, exposes their folly. Ewald.

2. a. Fools take up shame, carry it off as all they get by folly. Rosenmüller and Jarchi.

2. b. οἱ δὲ ἀσεβεῖς ὕψωσαν ἀτιμίαν. LXX. Fools exalt shame, prize what others despise.

3. The A. V. follows the Vulg. ("stultorum exaltatio ignominia") in a paraphrase which evades the difficulty.

CHAPTER IV.

1 Solomon, to persuade obedience, 3 sheweth what instruction he had of his parents, 5 to study wisdom, 14 and to shun the path of the wicked. 20 He exhorteth to faith, 23 and sanctification.

HEAR, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

3 For I was my father's son, [a] tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother.

4 [b] He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

[a] 1 Chron. 29. 1.
[b] 1 Chron. 28. 9.

CHAP. IV. 1. The words "ye children" indicate as usual a new section returning, after the break of iii. 27—35, to the old strain of fatherly counsel.

2. *doctrine*] "Fair speech," as in vii. 21, knowledge orally given and received.

3. The words, like those of Eccles. i. 12, 18, fit in admirably, to say the least, with the belief that we have the words of Solomon himself. The King of Israel looks back from his glorious throne and his matured wisdom to the training which was the starting-point. In both cases, too, the statement agrees with what may be inferred from the history. The word "tender" seems chosen as if to harmonize with the use of the same epithet in 1 Chro. xxix. 1. The child of David's age, his training was likely to have fallen, more than that of his older brothers, into his mother's hands; and the part taken by Bathsheba in 1 K. i., no less than the friendship between her and Nathan, indicates that such a training might well have laid the foundation of his future wisdom. And so he claims attention on the ground that he is uttering no new counsels, but such as he had heard in his youth. His "doctrine" is, as the word signifies, a *tradition* of what is true and pure. Noteworthy is the prominence given to the mother's share in the training of the child. Among the Israelites and Egyptians alone, of the nations of the old world, was the son's reverence for the mother placed side by side with that which he owed to his father. The introduction of the personal element in the 'Wisdom of Solomon' (x. 5—8), seems to indicate that the writer had seen such an element here, and thought it necessary to introduce it in order to sustain the character which he personates.

"Only *beloved*," literally, as the italics shew, "only," but the word is used apparently (as in Gen. xxii. 2, 12, where it is applied to Isaac) in its derived sense, "beloved like an only son," and is so translated by the LXX. (ἀγαπώμενος), while the Vulg. gives "unigenitus." Its use with this sense is interesting, as illustrating the words applied to our Lord, as the "only begotten" (John i. 3), the "beloved" (Eph. i. 6).

4. From this verse to *v.* 20 must be regarded as the counsel which the teacher gives

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

7 Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

9 She shall give to thine head [c] an ornament of grace: [1] a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; [d] and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

13 Take fast hold of instruction; let *her* not go: keep her; for she *is* thy life.

14 ¶ [e] Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*.

15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall.

17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

18 But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

19 The way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

20 ¶ My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they *are* life unto those that find them, and † health to all their flesh.

† Heb. *medicine.*

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as having come to him, in substance at least, from his father. So considered we may compare them with words like those in 2 S. xxiii. 2, 3; 1 Chro. xxviii. 9, xxix. 17; Ps. xv., xxiv., xxxvii.

7. The word, and possibly the construction, is the same as in i. 7. **The beginning of wisdom** is "get wisdom." To seek is to find, to desire is to obtain. (Comp. Wisd. vi. 18.) So the LXX. and Vulg. But the A. V. rendering is supported by good authority.

12. The ever-recurring parable of the journey of life meets us again. In the way of wisdom the path is clear and open, obstacles disappear; in the quickest activity ("when thou *runnest*") there is no hurry, and therefore no risk of falling.

13. *she is thy life*] Another parallel between what is asserted of the personified Wisdom in this book and of the Incarnate Wisdom in John i. 4.

14. The class of "evil men" is primarily that of the robbers and men of blood of ch. i.

16. The fearful stage of debasement when the tendency to sin is like the craving for stimulants, as a condition without which there can be no repose.

17. According to the prevalent interpretation, the "bread of wickedness" and the "wine of violence" are bread and wine gained by unjust deeds (so Amos ii. 8). Another, but less probable, interpretation is, "They eat wickedness as bread, and drink violence as wine." Comp. Job xv. 16, xxxiv. 7.

18. *the shining light, that shineth*] The two Hebrew words are not, like the English, forms of the same root. The first has the sense of **bright** or clear. The beauty of a cloudless sunshine growing on, shining as it goes, to the full and perfect day, is chosen as the fittest figure of the ever-increasing brightness of the good man's life. The close resemblance of this comparison to the "last words of David" (2 S. xxiii. 4) is in favour of the view that the writer is here reproducing what he had been taught.

19. It is interesting to note the resemblance between these words and our Lord's teaching, John xi. 10, xii. 35.

20. The counsel heard from his father comes to an end, and the teacher speaks again in his own person, with the solemn formula of admonition.

22. *health*] Better, **healing**, or "medicine," as in iii. 8.

† Heb. *above all keeping.*

23 ¶ Keep thy heart † with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life.

† Heb. *frowardness of mouth, and perverseness of lips.*

24 Put away from thee † a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and ‖ let all thy ways be established.

‖ Or, *all thy ways shall be ordered aright.*

27 *f* Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

f Deut. 5. 32.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Solomon exhorteth to the study of wisdom.* 3 *He sheweth the mischief of whoredom and riot.* 15 *He exhorteth to contentedness, liberality, and chastity.* 22 *The wicked are overtaken with their own sins.*

MY son, attend unto my wisdom, *and* bow thine ear to my understanding:

2 That thou mayest regard discretion, and *that* thy lips may keep knowledge.

3 ¶ *a* For the lips of a strange woman drop *as* an honeycomb, and her † mouth *is* smoother than oil:

a chap. 2. 16. & 6. 24.

† Heb. *palate.*

4 But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword.

5 *b* Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

b chap. 7. 27.

6 Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, *that* thou canst not know *them.*

7 Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

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23. *with all diligence*] The A. V. follows the LXX. and Vulg. But the Hebrew preposition has a different meaning, and we may translate, with nearly all commentators, **Above all keeping** (sc. with more vigilance than men use over aught else) **keep thy heart.** The words that follow carry on the same similitude. The fountains and wells of the East were watched over with special care. A stone was rolled to the mouth of the well, so that "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (S. of S. iv. 12), became the type of all that is most jealously guarded. So it is here. The heart is such a fountain, out of it flow the "issues" of life. Shall we let those streams be tainted at the fountain-head?

24—26. The "streams" just spoken of are tracked to their three outlets. Speech turned from its true purpose, the wandering eye that leads on to evil, action hasty and inconsiderate, are the natural results where we do not "above all keeping keep our heart."

27. The ever-recurring image of the straight road on which no one ever loses his way represents here as elsewhere the onward course through life of the man who seeks and finds wisdom. The LXX. adds two verses, in the same strain, of no special interest except as shewing the tendency of the translators, or of some previous editor, to add and embellish. See Introduction.

CHAP. V. 1. The formula of a new counsel, introducing in this case another warning against the besetting sin of youth: the danger which, as we have seen in ii. 16, was becoming more and more prominent.

2. *and that thy lips may keep*] Lit. "and thy lips shall keep."

3. The same comparison which we find used in Ps. lv. 21, to describe the treachery of a false friend, represents also the still more fatal semblance of the "strange woman."

4. *wormwood*] In Eastern medicine this herb, the Absinthium of Greek and Latin botanists, was looked upon as poisonous rather than medicinal. So in Deut. xxix. 18, the Chaldee Targum gives "deadly wormwood," and in Rev. viii. 11, "many men died of the waters because they were made bitter" with the star that was called "Wormwood." (Comp. Amos v. 7.) The thought finds an almost verbal parallel in Plautus ('Trucul.' I. ii. 75):

"In melle sunt linguæ sitæ vestræ atque orationes
Lacteque; corda felle sunt lita atque acerbo aceto."

6. It seems better (with the LXX. and Vulg.) to take the verbs as in the third pers. fem. rather than in the second masc., and then the verse stands thus, **Lest she should ponder** (or "She ponders not") **the way of life, her paths move to and fro** (unsteady as an earthquake); **she knows not.** The words describe with a terrible vividness the state of heart and soul which prostitution brings upon its victims; the reckless blindness that will not think, tottering on the abyss, yet loud in its defiant mirth, ignoring the dreadful future. The A. V. is, however, supported by Rosenmüller and Michaelis. See Note below.

8 Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:

9 Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:

10 Lest strangers be filled with † thy wealth; and thy labours *be* in the house of a stranger;

† Heb. *thy strength.*

11 And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,

12 And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;

13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

14 I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

15 ¶ Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

16 Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, *and* rivers of waters in the streets.

17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.

18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

19 *Let her be as* the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts † satisfy thee at all times; and † be thou ravished always with her love.

† Heb. *water thee.*
† Heb. *err thou always in her love.*

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9. *thine honour*] sc. "the grace and freshness of thy youth," as in Hosea xiv. 6; Dan. x. 8. The thought of that fresh bloom in its beauty is to guard the young man against the sins that stain and mar it.

the cruel] The word seems purposely vague. It may refer to the husband of the adulteress, jealous, or feigning jealousy, or possibly, as Rosenmüller takes it (though the Heb. noun is masculine), to the adulteress herself. In any case the slave of lust sacrifices "years" that might have been peaceful and happy to one who is merciless.

10. Here too the "strangers" include (the plural being used purposely) the whole gang of those into whose hands the slave of lust yields himself. The words are significant as shewing that the older punishment of death (Deut. xxii. 20; Ezek. xvi. 38; John viii. 4) was not always inflicted, and that the detected adulterer was exposed rather to indefinite extortion. Besides loss of purity and peace, the sin, in all its forms, brings poverty. The man who yields to it comes into the power of those who will drain him dry. It does not seem necessary to suppose with Ewald that the adulterer became, by formal sentence, the slave of the husband, but that he in practice accepted the position of entire subservience in order to escape death.

11. Yet one more curse is attendant on impurity. We know not what special forms of disease were then the penalty of this sin; yet all analogy leads to the belief that, as in later times, it did, in this way also, bring its own punishment.

12. The climax goes on. Bitterer than slavery, poverty, disease, will be the bitterness of self-reproach, the remorse without hope, that worketh death.

14. The conscience-stricken sinner feels that he has only just escaped the extremest penalty of all, that of being stoned to death (Lev. xx. 10; Deut. xxii. 22). He had been "almost" given up to every form of evil in the sight of the whole assembly of fellow-townsmen; "almost," therefore, condemned to the punishment which that assembly might inflict. The public scandal of the sin is brought in as its last aggravating feature.

15. The teacher has painted all the evils of mere sensual passion, but he seeks to counteract it, not merely by that picture, nor by a high-toned asceticism, but chiefly by setting forth the true blessedness of which it is the counterfeit. The true wife is as a fountain of refreshment, where the weary soul may quench its thirst. Even the joy which is of the senses appears, as in the Song of Solomon, purified and stainless. The resemblance between the two books in their treatment of this subject is singularly striking (S. of S. ii. 9, iv. 5, 12, 15).

16. The true sequel to the preceding precept. Wedded love streams forth in blessing on all around, on children and on neighbours and in the streets, precisely because the wife's true love is given to the husband only.

19. *Let her be*] The words are not in the Heb., and the sentence is better taken absolutely: "A loving hind (is she) and pleasant roe." As in the whole circle of Arab and Persian poetry the antelope and the gazelle are the chosen images of beauty—lithe of limb, graceful in motion, dark and lustrous of eye, fleet and strong, they served with equal fitness for the masculine and feminine types of it. So in Tabitha and Dorcas (Acts ix. 36) we find the name of the animal chosen as that of a woman.

20 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

[c] Job 31. 4. & 34. 21. chap. 15. 3. Jer. 16. 17. & 32. 19.

21 [c] For the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

22 ¶ His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his † sins.

† Heb. *sin.*

23 He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

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20. Emphasis is laid as before on the origin of the beguiler. Will the Israelite leave the true wife of his youth for a foreign harlot? Will he share the love of that harlot with those who are "strangers" like herself?

21. One more warning. The sin is not against man, nor dependent on man's detection only. The secret sin is open before the eyes of Jehovah. In the balance of his righteous judgment are weighed all human acts, this not excepted.

pondereth] There is a significant emphasis in the recurrence of the word used of the harlot herself in *v.* 6: "She ponders not, but God does."

23. The thoughts are led on to the end of the sensuous life. To "die without instruction," life ended, but the discipline of life fruitless; to "go astray" as if *drunk* with the greatness of his folly (the same word is used as for "ravished" in *v.* 19) even to the end. This is the close of what might have gone on brightening to the perfect day.

NOTE on CHAP. V. 6.

The points at issue may be briefly stated for the student.

(1) The forms of the two verbs may be either in the 3 pers. fem., or the 2 pers. masc.; and so far it is open to us to apply them to the tempted youth, or to the temptress.

(2) The question whether the conjunction פן must always have a prohibitive dependent force (undoubtedly its usual, if not invariable, meaning), or can be taken as equivalent to לא in the second clause as a direct negative, is that on which the construction mainly turns.

(3) Either hypothesis admits of a combination with either alternative of (1), so that we have at least four constructions, to say nothing of variations caused by different shades of meaning attached to the verbs themselves. So we get:

(a) The LXX., ὁδοὺς γὰρ ζωῆς οὐκ ἐπέρχεται· σφαλεραὶ δὲ αἱ τροχιαὶ αὐτῆς, καὶ οὐκ εὔγνωστοι, agreeing substantially with

(b) The Vulg.: "Per semitam vitæ non ambulant; vagi sunt gressus ejus et non investigabiles."

(c) Luther's, following the LXX. except in the last clause, which is more accurately given as "dass sie weiss nicht wo sie gehet."

(d) The A.V., supported by Aben-Ezra, Rosenmüller, Michaelis.

(e) That given above, supported (with slight variations) by Schultens, Umbreit, Hitzig, Bertheau, Maurer, Ewald.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Against suretiship,* 6 *idleness,* 12 *and mischievousness.* 16 *Seven things hateful to God.* 20 *The blessings of obedience.* 25 *The mischiefs of whoredom.*

MY son, if thou be surety for thy friend, *if* thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,

2 Thou art snared with the words

CHAP. VI. **1.** Suretiship also was among the perils of the time; so grave a danger that it might lead, no less than impurity, to the loss of all peace and happiness. Scanty as are the materials for a history of the word, and the practice, and the Jewish law affecting it, the attempt to trace it will not be without interest. See Note below.

stricken thy hand] The natural symbols of the promise to keep a contract, in this case, to pay another man's debts. Comp. xvii. 18, xxii. 26; Job xvii. 3; Ezek. xvii. 18.

friend,...stranger] The two characters are carefully distinguished. (1) The companion, on whose behalf the young man pledges himself. (2) The "stranger," probably the Phœnician money-lender to whom he makes himself responsible.

2. It would be better perhaps to punctuate this verse as continuing the hypothetical statement, "if thou art snared with the words, &c.," rather than as the conclusion to the case put in *v.* 1.

of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, [1] and make sure thy friend.

[1] Or, *so shalt thou prevail with thy friend.*

4 Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids.

5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand *of the hunter*, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

6 ¶ Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

8 Provideth her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest.

9 [a] How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

[a] chap. 24. 33.

10 *Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

11 [b] So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

[b] chap. 13. 4. & 20. 4.

12 ¶ A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.

13 He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;

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3. The way in which the young man who has given his note of hand is to extricate himself is described vividly enough. The A. V. gives no satisfactory sense, and we had better read: "Do this now, O my son, and free thyself when thou hast come into thy friend's hands; go, **bow thyself down** (perhaps "stamp with thy foot," or "hasten"), **press hotly upon thy friend.** By persuasion, and if need be, by threats, get back the bond which thou hast been entrapped into signing." The friend is, as before, the companion, not the creditor. The vividness of the Vulg., "Discurre, festina, suscita amicum tuum," deserves notice.

5. The italics ("of the hunter") shew that the two clauses in the Hebrew are not parallel in extent. Either the word "hand" may have had in the first clause some technical meaning, as "snare," or may have been followed by a word like that in the A. V. The LXX. favours the latter conjecture.

6. The warning against the wastefulness of the prodigal is followed by a warning as emphatic against the wastefulness of sloth. The lesson is drawn in the first instance from the apparent economy of the ant. The point of comparison is not so much the foresight of the insect as its unwearied activity during the appointed season, rebuking man's inaction at a special crisis (*v.* 4). In xxx. 25, the storing, provident habit of the ant is brought under our notice.

7. The words express the wonder with which the observer looks on the phenomena of insect-life. We see, as it were, the organisation of an army or a polity, and yet all comes from something strange and mysterious, which to the Hebrew was without a name. All that he could say was that the ant had "*no* guide, overseer, or ruler." "Guide," better **captain**, as in Josh. x. 24, Judg. xi. 6, 11. It is interesting to note that the LXX. introduces here a corresponding reference to the industry of the bee. See Introduction.

9. The first sketch of the fuller picture of xxiv. 30—34. (10) The Hebrew, richer than the English, employs three synonymes for "sleep." A little sleep, slumber, folding of the hands, as for a *siesta*.

11. The similitude is drawn from the two sources of Eastern terror. The "traveller," sc. "the thief in the night," coming suddenly to plunder, the "armed man" (comp. the LXX.: κακὸς ὁδοιπόρος), lit. "the man of the shield," the armed robber, like the men of i. 10, lying in wait and attacking. The habit of indolence is more fatally destructive even than these marauders.

12. *A naughty person*] lit. "a man of Belial." This word, as it occurs in narrative (Deut. xiii. 13; Judg. xix. 22), has been already explained. (See note on Deut. xiii. 13.) But here, for the first time, we have, as it were, the portrait of the man who is not to be trusted, whose look and gestures warn all who can observe against him. The picture is wonderfully life-like, individual, yet generic, indicating physiognomic facts that are true at all times. The speech of such an one is tortuous and crafty, he walks (*lit.*) "in crookedness of mouth."

13. Not speech only, but all other means by which man holds intercourse with man, are turned to instruments of fraud and falsehood. The wink which tells the accomplice that the victim is already snared, the gestures with foot and hand, half of deceit, and half of mockery, these would betray him to any one who was not blind. A curiously close parallel is found in the description of a like character by the Roman poet Nævius: "alium tenet, alii adnictat, alibi manus est, alii percellit pedem." (*Tarentilla.*)

14 Frowardness *is* in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he †soweth discord.

† Heb. *casteth forth.*

15 Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.

16 ¶ These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination † unto him:

† Heb. *of his soul.*

17 † A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

† Heb. *Haughty eyes.*

18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, *c* feet that be swift in running to mischief,

c Rom. 3. 15.

19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

20 ¶ *d* My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

d chap. 1. 8.

21 Bind them continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck.

22 When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

23 *e* For the commandment *is* a ‖ lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life:

e Ps. 19. 8. & 119. 105.
‖ Or, *candle*

24 *f* To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery ‖ of the tongue of a strange woman.

f chap. 2. 16. & 5. 3. & 7. 5.
‖ Or, *of the strange tongue.*

25 *g* Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids.

g Matt. 5. 28.

26 For by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to a piece of bread: and † the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.

† Heb. *the woman of a man,* or, *a man's wife.*

27 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?

29 So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.

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15. But here also there is a Nemesis. The duper and the dupe shall share the same calamity.

16. The abrupt opening indicates a new section, but not a new subject. The closing words, "he that soweth discord" (*v.* 19, comp. *v.* 14), lead us to identify the sketch as taken from the same character. With the recognised Hebrew form of climax (see Prov. xxx. 15, 18, 24; Amos i. ii.; Job v. 19), the teacher here enumerates six qualities as detestable, and the seventh as worse than all (seven, here as elsewhere, representing completeness, whether for good or evil), but all the seven in this instance belong to one and the self-same man, the man of Belial of *v.* 12.

20. The recurrence of the formula of admonition (with the renewed reference to the mother's work in education) indicates a fresh section. The old counsel, the old similitude reappear: *v.* 22 carries the thought of the amulet hung round the neck (comp. iii. 3) a step further. No outward charm, but the law of obedience, shall give safety to the traveller, in his journey, when he sleeps or when he wakes.

23. The parallelism with Ps. cxix. 105, deserves special notice. The alliteration, "the law is light," like the Vulg. "lex lux," reproduces a corresponding *paronomasia* in the Heb.

24. The evil against which the young disciple had been already warned is again painted in all its circumstances and all its consequences in two distinct pictures (24—35, and vii. 5—23), more full and vivid than before. "Evil woman," lit. "woman of evil," stronger than the simple adjective. In reading what follows, it must be remembered that the warning is against the danger of the sin of the adulterous wife.

the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman] Literally, according to the Hebrew punctuation, **the flattery of a strange tongue**, though, of course with the same significance.

25. *eyelids*] rather than "eyes," possibly as pointing to the Eastern custom of painting them on the outside with *kohl* so as to give brightness and languishing expression to the eye. The practice had prevailed from a very early date. Arab poetry is full of praise of beauty of this kind.

26. The italics shew that the Hebrew is elliptical and somewhat obscure, but the meaning of the writer seems to be that the two forms of evil of which he speaks bring, each of them, their own penalty. By the one the man is brought to the poverty in which he has to beg for "a piece of bread" (comp. 1 S. ii. 36): by the other and more deadly sin he incurs a peril which may affect his life (see Note below).

30 *Men* do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;

31 But *if* he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.

32 *But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh † understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

† Heb. *heart.*

33 A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

34 For jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

35 † He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

† Heb. *He will not accept the face of any ransom.*

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30. The argument is one *à fortiori:* If men punish the thief so rigorously (enforcing sevenfold restitution), even though they make allowances for him, "do not despise" him, because he has only stolen to ward off starvation, how much sorer will be the punishment of the sin which can plead no such mitigation! By some, however, the words "do not despise" are taken as meaning "do not think lightly of his guilt, do not let him off, in spite of extenuating circumstances."

31. The letter of the law required ordinarily a two-fold, in special cases a four-fold, or even five-fold restitution (Exod. xxii. 1—7). The verse either indicates that the rate had been increased under the more rigid police of monarchy, or else *seven* is used idiomatically to express the completed ruin of the detected criminal.

35. The words paint the immediate consequence of detection. The husband jealous, raging, threatening life, looking beyond any money compensation (lit. "will not accept the face of any ransom") to the satisfaction of his revenge.

NOTES on CHAP. VI. 1, 26.

1. "Surety." The word. Out of the whole vocabulary of commerce, few words have had a wider history. The verb עָרַב, *ârab*, has, as one of its meanings, that of giving a pledge. From it comes the substantive form *arrhabon*, the "pledge," or security for payment, which Judah gave to Tamar (Gen. xxxviii. 17), which David was to bring back from his brothers (1 S. xvii. 18). So the word was used in the primitive trade transactions of the early Israelites. By the Phœnician traders (Semitic in their language, though classed among the descendants of Ham in Gen. x. 15), it was carried to the Isles of Khittim, to the shores of Greece, Sicily, and Carthage. The old Canaanite word, passing into the transactions of Greek traders, passed also into the eloquence of Greek orators (Isæus, 71. 20): so used it was found by the Apostle of the Gentiles, and raised by him to be a parable of spiritual truths, such as the population of great commercial cities like Ephesus and Corinth would be sure to appreciate. All gifts of the Spirit were but the "pledge," the "earnest" (2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5; Eph. i. 14) of the yet greater gift of the future. The word went still further on its travels. The Phœnicians carried it to Carthage, the Carthaginians to Italy. In the literature which represents the earlier intercourse between the two nations, when new words and phrases were caught up eagerly, we find, as *e.g.* in the comedies of Plautus, the word itself, without the alteration of a letter. A little later it shared the fate of many other words, and appeared, clipped and curtailed, the *arrha* of Roman lawyers, the piece of money paid as the formal symbol of a completed contract. From Rome it passed into the languages of western Europe, and in the *arrhes* (or, as in Scotch, "arles") which the tourist pays on making a contract for fresh guides or horses, we find a link which connects the Patriarchs of old in the land of Canaan with the French or Swiss postmasters of the 19th century.

In the warnings against this suretiship in the Book of Proverbs we may trace, not less than in those against the other great evil, the influence of intercourse with the Phœnicians. Varying in form and circumstance the conditions of successful commerce are essentially the same at all times, and the merchants of Tyre and Zidon, like their Lombard, Venetian, and Dutch successors, seem to have discovered the value of credit as an element of wealth. A man might obtain goods, or escape the pressure of a creditor at an inconvenient season, or obtain a loan on more favourable terms, by finding security. To give such security might be one of the kindest offices which one friend could render to another. Side by side, however, with a legitimate system of credit there sprung up, as in later times, a fraudulent counterfeit. Phœnician or Jewish money-lenders were ready to make their loans to the spendthrift. He was equally ready to find a companion who would become his surety. It was merely a form, just writing a few words, just "a clasping of the hands" in token that the obligation was accepted, and that was all. It would be unfriendly to refuse. And yet, as

the teacher warns his hearers, there might be, in that moment of careless weakness, the first link of a long chain of ignominy, galling, fretting, wearing, depriving life of all its peace. The Jewish law of debt, hard and stern like that of most ancient nations, might be enforced against him in all its rigour. Money and land might go, the very bed under him might be seized, and his garment torn from his back (xx. 16, xxii. 26), the older and more lenient law of Exod. xxii. 27 having apparently fallen into disuse. He might be brought into a life-long bondage, subject only to the possible relief of the year of Jubilee, when the people were religious enough to remember and observe it. His wives, his sons, his daughters might be sharers in that slavery (Neh. v. 3—5). It is doubtful whether he could claim the privilege which under Exod. xxi. 2 belonged to an Israelite slave that had been bought. Against such an evil, as this book and that of the son of Sirach describe it, no warnings could be too frequent or too urgent.

26. The difficulty lies in the elliptical abruptness of the Heb. "for on account of a harlot, to a piece of bread." The A. V. way of filling up the ellipsis has the support of Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Maurer. The LXX. however gives τιμὴ γὰρ πόρνης ὅση καὶ ἑνὸς ἄρτου; the Vulg. takes the same view: "*Pretium enim scorti vix est unius panis*," and it is supported by Ewald and Bertheau. So taken, it presents a parallel to the prudential teaching of Horace ('Sat.' I. 2. 119—131), as to the greater danger of adultery as compared with the more common forms of the same evil. The cheapness of the one sin (comp. Gen. xxxviii. 17) is contrasted, not without a touch of scorn, with the more ruinous consequences of the other. It may be questioned, however, whether this interpretation is not altogether below the ethical standard of the book.

26. *the adulteress*] Literally "a man's wife." The Hebrew accents connect the words with the first clause, as if to sharpen the second by an abrupt emphasis "but as for a man's wife;—she hunts for the precious life."

CHAPTER VII.

1 Solomon persuadeth to a sincere and kind familiarity with wisdom. 6 In an example of his own experience, he sheweth 10 the cunning of an whore, 22 and the desperate simplicity of a young wanton. 24 He dehorteth from such wickedness.

MY son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

2 Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

3 [a] Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

4 Say unto wisdom, Thou *art* my sister; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman:

5 [b] That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words.

6 ¶ For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

7 And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among [†] the youths, a young man void of understanding,

8 Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,

9 In the twilight, [†] in the evening, in the black and dark night:

10 And, behold, there met him a woman *with* the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.

11 ([c] She *is* loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:

[a] Deut. 6. 8. & 11. 18. chap. 3. 3.
[b] chap. 5. 3.
[†] Heb. *the sons.*
[†] Heb. *in the evening of the day.*
[c] chap. 9. 13.

CHAP. VII. **1—4.** The introduction to a yet more lifelike portrait of the harlot adulteress of an Eastern city, contrasted with the true feminine ideal of the wisdom who is to be the "sister" and "kinswoman" of the young man as he goes on his way through life.

6. *casement*] as in Judg. v. 28. The latticed opening of the kiosk of an Eastern house, overlooking the street. The LXX. takes the verbs as if they were in the third person, "she looked—she beheld."

7—9. The first character appears on the scene, young, "simple," in the bad sense of the word; *open* to all impressions of evil, empty-headed and empty-hearted; lounging near the house of ill-repute, not as yet deliberately purposing to sin, but placing himself in the way of it, wandering idly to see one of whose beauty he had heard. And this at a time when the pure in heart would seek their home, lit. "in the cool, in the evening, in the eyeball of night (a bold expressive figure for its blackness), and in darkness." It is impossible not to see a certain symbolic meaning in this picture of the gathering gloom. Night is falling over the young man's life as the shadows deepen.

12 Now *is she* without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

13 So she caught him, and kissed him, *and* † with an impudent face said unto him,

14 † *I have* peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.

15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

16 I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved *works*, with fine linen of Egypt.

17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

19 For the goodman *is* not at home, he is gone a long journey:

20 He hath taken a bag of money † with him, *and* will come home at ‖ the day appointed.

21 With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

22 He goeth after her † straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;

23 Till a dart strike through his

† Heb. *she strengthened her face, and said.*
† Heb. *peace offerings are upon me.*
† Heb. *in his hand.*
‖ Or, *the new moon.*
† Heb. *suddenly.*

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11. *loud and stubborn*] Both words describe the half-animal signs of a vicious nature (comp. Hos. iv. 16), the eager *panting*, the restlessness of passion, the moving hither and thither till she has found her victim.

14. This pretence of a religious feast gives us an insight into some strange features of popular religion under the monarchy of Judah. The harlot uses the technical word (Lev. iii. 1) for the "peace-offerings," and makes them the starting-point for her sin. They have to be eaten on the same day that they are offered (Lev. vii. 15, 16), and she invites her victim to the feast. It is of course possible that the worship of Israel had itself so degenerated as to lose for the popular conscience all moral significance; but the hypothesis stated above (ii. 16) affords a simpler explanation. She who speaks is a foreigner who, under a show of conformity to the religion of Israel, still retains her old notions, and a feast-day to her is nothing but a time of self-indulgence, which she may invite another to share with her. It is because there is such good cheer at home that she has come forth, pretending a deep, long-standing love, to seek the one whom her heart prefers. She flatters him with the thought that instead of waiting to be wooed she has come forth to seek him. If we assume, as probable, that these harlots of Jerusalem were mainly of Phœnician origin, the connection of their worship with their sin would be but the continuation of their original *cultus*.

16. The words point to the art and commerce which flourished under Solomon.

carved works] Another form of the Heb. word is used in this sense in Ps. cxliv. 12 ("polished corners"). There, however, it is joined with a noun, and here most commentators take it as meaning "striped coverlets of linen of Egypt."

17. *bed*] The two words are different in Heb.; that of *v.* 16 meaning chiefly the bedstead; this, the couch itself. The love of perfumes is here, as in Isai. iii. 24, a sign of luxurious vice.

cinnamon] It is worth noticing that the Hebrew word is identical with the English. The spice imported by the Phœnician traders from the further East, probably from Ceylon, has kept its name through all changes of language.

19. Here probably the reference to the "goodman," the husband, is a blind. The harlot enhances the value of her favours, and at the same time promises freedom from detection. He will not come back "till the time appointed," *i.e.* (as with the cognate word in Ps. lxxxi. 3) till the "next new moon." A touch of scorn may be noticed in the form of speech. Not "*my* husband," but simply "*the* goodman." The use of the latter word is due to the wish of the translators to give a colloquial character to this part of their version. The Heb. gives simply "the man" (אִישׁ).

21. *fair speech*] The Hebrew word, the same as that usually translated "doctrine," or "learning" (Prov. i. 5, iv. 2, ix. 9), has a keen irony about it which it is difficult to convey in another language.

22. The first of the two comparisons is clear enough. The young man goes to his destruction blindly, unconsciously, as the ox to the slaughter. But the second is not so clear. Literally it runs thus: "As a fetter to the correction of a fool." This leaves the parallelism of the two clauses incomplete, and hence some have restored it as in the A.V. by inverting the order of the words; others have rendered the word 'fetter' as meaning 'dog' (LXX.) or 'lamb' (Vulg). (See Note below.)

23. The first clause does not connect it-

liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it *is* for his life.

24 ¶ Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.

25 Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.

26 For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong *men* have been slain by her.

27 [d] Her house *is* the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

[d] chap. 2. 18. & 5. 5.

self very clearly with the foregoing, and is probably affected by the corrupt text which makes it perplexing. In the present state of the text it stands as a parenthesis, describing the fate of the slave of lust interposed between the second and third of three comparisons.

26. The house of the harlot had been compared before (ii. 18) to the grave, to the world of the dead; now it is likened to a field of battle strewn with the corpses of the slain. "Many strong men." The word speaks rather of the multitude than of the individual strength of those who have perished. "Mighty hosts are all they that have been slain by her." So the LXX.: *ἀναρίθμητοί εἰσιν οὓς πεφόνευκεν*. This is followed naturally enough by a repetition of the old similitude from ii. 18, v. 5.

NOTE on CHAP VII. 22.

The sing. of the word translated "stocks" (עֶכֶס) is found here only in the O.T. The plur. occurs in Isai. iii. 18, in the list of feminine ornaments, and seems to mean "ankle-band." From this comes the meaning "fetter." A literal version, however, "as a fetter to the correction of a fool," gives no adequate meaning, and the transposition of the A.V. violates the grammar of the sentence. The difficulty has been felt from a very early date, and has been met or evaded in many different ways. (1) The LXX. seems to have read כֶּלֶב, and gives *ὥσπερ κύων ἐπὶ δεσμοὺς*, and is followed by the Syriac or Chaldee. So taken, the comparison falls in with the common Greek proverb (Erasm. 'Adag.' II. 7. 67), *κύων ἐπὶ δεσμά*: "As a dog, enticed by food, goes to the chain that is to bind him, so does the youth go to the temptress." (2) The Vulg. is yet more conjectural: "*et quasi agnus lasciviens et ignorans, quod ad vincula stultus trahatur.*" None of the attempts of commentators to get a meaning out of the present text are in any degree satisfactory. The LXX., it may be added, as if left to conjecture, adds another comparison: *ἢ ὡς ἔλαφος τοξεύματι*.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The fame,* 6 *and evidency of wisdom.* 10 *The excellency,* 12 *the nature,* 15 *the power,* 18 *the riches,* 22 *and the eternity of wisdom.* 32 *Wisdom is to be desired for the blessedness it bringeth.*

DOTH not [a] wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?

[a] chap. 1. 20.

2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

3 She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of man.

5 O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

CHAP. VIII. **1.** The section is in part an expansion of i. 20—23, but it is obviously also a companion picture to that of ch. vii., and serves in some measure to generalize and idealize it. Contrasted with the actual harlot, yet more with the harlot Sense, is the Wisdom whom the disciple had been told (vii. 4) to make his sister and his kinswoman. He, as Heracles in the Greek mythos of Prodicus, is to look first on this picture and on that, and then to make his choice. She too calls (*v.* 5) to the "simple" and the "fools," and they have to choose between her voice and that of the Temptress.

2. The full enumeration of localities points to the publicity and openness of Wisdom's teaching, as in i. 21, as contrasted with the stealth and secrecy and darkness which shroud the harlot's enticements.

4. *men,...sons of man*] The two words are used, which, like *viri* and *homines*, describe the higher and the lower, the stronger and the weaker. Comp. Ps. iv. 2.

7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* [†]an abomination to my lips.

† Heb. *the abomination of my lips.*

8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing [†]froward or perverse in them.

† Heb. *wreathed.*

9 They *are* all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

11 [b]For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

[b] Job 28. 15. Ps. 19. 10. chap. 3. 15. & 16. 16.

12 I wisdom dwell with [1]prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

[1] Or, *subtilty.*

13 The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength.

15 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

18 [c]Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable riches and righteousness.

[c] chap. 3. 16.

19 [d]My fruit *is* better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

[d] chap. 3. 14.

20 I [1]lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

[1] Or, *walk*

21 That I may cause those that

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6. *excellent*] Lit. "princely things." The word is not the same as that translated "excellent" in xxii. 20, and is elsewhere always used of persons, as in 1 S. ix. 16, 2 S. v. 2. It is characteristic of the highly poetic style of this part of the book that it should be used here either of the things taught; or, as if adverbially, of the character of the teaching.

8, 9. It is interesting to note how even here, before we come to the more striking anticipations of *vv.* 22—31, the words of the ideal Wisdom find their highest fulfilment in that of the Incarnate Word. There also gracious words proceeded out of His mouth (Luke iv. 22), in Him Wisdom was justified of all her children (Matt. xi. 19); just as here she declares that "her ways are plain," not to the perverse and careless, but "to him that understandeth."

12. In the first address of Wisdom (i. 22—33) her words were stern and terrible. The first step in the divine education is to proclaim "the terrors of the Lord;" but here she neither promises nor threatens, but, as if lost in self-contemplation, speaks of her own excellence. "Prudence." The "subtilty," the wiliness of the serpent (Gen. iii. 1), in itself neutral, but capable of being turned to good as well as evil. The two words stand in the same relation to each other as σοφία does to φρόνησις, with yet more exactness, perhaps, as σοφία to δεινότης, in the terminology of Greek ethics (Aristot. 'Eth.' vi. 6). Wisdom, high and lofty, occupied with things heavenly and eternal, does not exclude, yea, rather "dwells with" the practical tact and insight needed for the life of common men. "Witty inventions," **Counsels** would, perhaps, express better than any other word the truth intended, that all special rules for the details of life spring out of the highest Wisdom as their source.

13. The balanced parallelism of the Hebrew would be better preserved by putting the colon after "evil way."

15. Not the common life of common men only, but the exercise of the highest sovereignty, must have this Wisdom as its ground. We can hardly fail to see in this passage (*vv.* 15—21) an echo of the teaching of the noble history of the choice of Solomon in 1 K. iii. 5—14. The words that imply rule are heaped one upon another to exhaust the list, the Eng. "princes" serving for two Hebrew words, of which the first might, perhaps, as a word of function rather than honour, be rendered "rulers."

17. *seek me early*] There is no adverb in the Hebrew, and it is questionable whether the verb, though it comes from the same root as that of "dawn" or "morning," conveys more than the simple sense of "seeking." The A.V. comes from the Vulg.: "qui mane vigilant ad me," and Luther.

18. *durable riches*] The special idea conveyed is that of a treasure piled up for many years, *ancient* wealth. Comp. the Greek maxim, ἀρχαιοπλούτων δεσποτῶν πολλὴ χάρις. Æsch. 'Agam.' 1043.

19. *gold, fine gold*] The first, probably, "native;" the second extracted from the ore. Comp. iii. 14.

love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the ‖fields, nor ‖the highest part of the dust of the world.

‖Or, *open places.* ‖Or, *the chief part.*

27 When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set ‖a compass upon the face of the depth:

‖Or, *a circle.*

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 [a]When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

[a] Gen. 1. 9, 10. Job 38. 10, 11. Ps. 104. 9.

30 Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;

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22. See Note below.

23. *I was set up*] The A.V. here follows the LXX. and Vulg., missing the force of the Hebrew, "I was anointed." Comp. Ps. ii. 6, where the same verb is so rendered in the margin, 2 Chro. xxviii. 15, and Ezek. xxxii. 30, and Mic. v. 4, where the noun derived from it is translated "princes." The image brought before us, if we accept this meaning, is that of wisdom anointed, as at her birth, with "the oil of gladness." It is fair to state, however, that the *Niphal* form of the verb which has this sense (נָסַךְ) is not found elsewhere, and that, though the sense of "anointing" is adopted by Rosenmüller and Bertheau, Hitzig connects the verb with סָכַךְ, "to weave," or "work," and so agrees with the Vulg. "ordinata sum" and the A.V.

or ever the earth was] Lit. with a plural noun of wonderful vividness, "from the times before the earth."

24. The order of creation corresponds to that which we find in Gen. i. Still more striking is the resemblance with the thoughts and language of the Book of Job, ch. xxii, xxvi., xxxviii. A world of waters, "great deeps" lying in darkness, this was the picture of the remotest time of which man could form any conception, and yet the co-existence of the uncreated Wisdom with the eternal Jehovah was before that.

25. Out of the chaos of waters rose the everlasting hills, type, as in Ps. xc. 2, of primeval time; yet what the Psalmist said of Jehovah, the teacher here asserts of Wisdom; she was before them all.

26. *the highest part of the dust of the world*] Lit. "the head of the dusts of the world." It is not clear what image in the mind of the writer answered to these words. The chief conjectures are, (1) the highest "dust," sc. the dry land, habitable, fit for cultivation, as contrasted with the waters of the chaotic deep; (2) looking to the fact that the word for "dust" is the same as that used in the history of the creation of man (Gen. ii. 7, iii. 19), and to the probability that that creation would not be passed over here, that "the head or chief of the dusts of the world" is none other than man himself. Comp. Eccles. iii. 20. (So Rosenmüller, Maurer, and Umbreit.) (3) "the first clods of earth," sc. those first created (so Hitzig).

27. *set a compass*] Better "circle" or "circuit," as in the marg. and Job xxii. 14, *i.e.* the great vault of heaven stretched over the deep seas.

29. Again, we have a distinct reproduction of the thoughts and words of Job xxxviii. 4, 10, 11.

30. *as one brought up with him*] The root-meaning of the Hebrew, "firmness, stedfastness," branches out in many directions, and we are left to choose between the derived meanings. (1) The A.V. starts from that of "establishing, bringing up, rearing," as in Num. xi. 12; Isai. lx. 4; Ruth iv. 16; "I was as his foster-child;" and is supported by Rosenmüller. (2) Others take the active force of the verb as "setting, fixing, constructing." "I was as his artificer," and this, it must be allowed, falls in best with the special point of the whole passage, the creative energy of Wisdom. So with Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, and Bertheau, the LXX. (ἁρμόζουσα), and Vulg. (cuncta componens), and Luther. Comp. Wisd. vii. 21, 22.

daily his delight] Hebrew, "day by day," with an apparent reference to the joy of the Creator in His workmanship, beholding it as "very good," Gen. i. 4, 10, 12, 31. To Wisdom herself also the work was no laborious task.

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed *are they that* keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed *is* the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall † obtain favour of the LORD.

36 But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

† Heb. *bring forth.*

She "sported" as it were, in the exuberance of her might and strength.

31. The closing words are also the highest and the noblest. Wisdom, who ordered the heavens, and laid firm the foundations of the earth, rejoicing in that work of hers, rejoices yet more in the world as inhabited by God's rational creatures (comp. Isai. xlv. 18). Giving joy and delight to God, she finds her delight among the sons of men. So far the words remind us of Hooker's noble doxology to the Divine Law, whose "seat is in the bosom of God...to whom all things in heaven and earth do homage . . . owning her as the mother of their peace and joy." But our thoughts are carried yet further. These words, like the rest, are as an unconscious prophecy fulfilled in the Divine Word, in whom were "hid all the treasures of Wisdom." By Him all things came into being (John i. 3), and "are held together" (Col. I. 17); He too is "in the bosom of the Father" (John i. 18), and in Him the Father was well pleased; and yet His "joy also is fulfilled," not in the glory of the material universe, but in His work among the sons of men.

32. The old exhortation returns now with a new force. The counsels are no longer those of prudence, calculation, human experience, but that of a Wisdom wide as the universe, eternal as Jehovah, ordering all things.

34. The image suggested seems to be either that of the officers who keep watch at the gate of a king's palace, dwelling in the sunshine of kingly favours, or, more probably, that of the Levites who guarded the doors of the sanctuary. (Pss. cxxxiv. 1, cxxxv, 2). Not less blessed than theirs is the lot of those who wait upon Wisdom in the Temple not made with hands.

35. Wisdom then is life, the only true life. The Word, the Light, is also the Life of man (John i. 4). The eternal life is to know God and Christ (John xvii. 3).

NOTE on CHAP. VIII. 22.

A verse which has played so important a part in the history of Christian dogma calls for more than a note of simple exegesis.

It is obvious that it carries us to a higher point than any previous words. Wisdom reveals herself as in fellowship with God. We cannot think of the Eternal Lord other than as one with whom Wisdom dwelt in the beginning. That Wisdom must be thought of as preceding all creation, stamped upon it all, one with God, yet in some way distinguishable from Him as the object of his love (*v.* 30). We cannot wonder that most interpreters should have seen in these words a prophetic anticipation of the mystery revealed in the Prologue of St John's Gospel, and cannot doubt that they served to prepare men for it. So, in a passage obviously echoing this, the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon (vii. 22—30) speaks of Wisdom in words which Apostles afterward apply to Christ as "the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness" (*v.* 26); (comp. Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3). So St John, carrying the thought to its completion, declares that all which Wisdom here speaks of herself was true in its highest sense of the Word that became flesh, that "was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God," by whom all things came into being, and who was also the Light that lighteth every man (John i. 1—14).

possessed] The word has acquired a special prominence in connexion with the Arian controversy. The meaning which it usually bears is that of "getting" (Gen. iv. 1), "buying" (Gen. xlvii. 22, 23, et al.), "possessing" (Jer. xxxii. 15). In this sense one of the oldest divine names was that of Possessor of Heaven and Earth (Gen. xiv. 19, 22). But the idea of thus "getting" or "possessing," involved, as a divine act in relation to the universe, the idea of creation, and thus in one or two passages the word might be rendered, though not accurately, by "created" (*e.g.* Ps. cxxxix. 13, and perhaps Gen. xiv. 19, 22). It would seem accordingly as if the Greek translators of the Old Testament oscillated between the two meanings, and in this passage we find the various renderings ἔκτισε "created" (LXX.), and ἐκτήσατο "possessed" (Aquila). The text with the former word naturally became one of the stock arguments of the Arians against the eternal coexistence of the Son, and

the other translation (sanctioned by Aquila) was as vehemently defended by the orthodox Fathers (Jerome, in loc.). Athanasius, receiving the ἔκτισεν, took it in the sense of appointing, and saw in the LXX. (ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ) a declaration that the Father had made the Son the "chief," the "head," the "sovereign," over all creation. There does not seem indeed any ground for the thought of creation either in the meaning of the root, or in the general usage of the word. What is meant in this passage is that we cannot think of God as ever having been without Wisdom. She is "as the beginning of His ways." So far as the words bear upon Christian dogma they accord with the words of Joh. i. 1, "the Word was with God" (πρὸς τὸν θεόν). The next words indeed assert priority to all the works of God, from "of old;" sc. from the first starting-point of time.

CHAPTER IX.

1 The discipline, 4 and doctrine of wisdom. 13 The custom, 16 and error of folly.

WISDOM hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:

2 She hath killed † her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.

† Heb. *her killing.*

3 She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city,

4 Whoso *is* simple, let him turn in hither: *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

5 Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine *which* I have mingled.

6 Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

7 He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked *man getteth* himself a blot.

8 [a] Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

[a] Matt. 7. 6.

9 Give *instruction* to a wise *man*, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just *man*, and he will increase in learning.

10 [b] The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding.

[b] Job 28. 28. Ps. 111. 10. chap. 1. 7.

11 [c] For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

[c] chap. 10. 27.

12 If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but *if* thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear *it*.

CHAP. IX. 1. The new section begins with a parable, itself full of beauty, and yet more interesting in its parallelism to the parables of the Supper, the Wedding Feast, and the like, in our Lord's teaching, Matt. xxii. 3, 4; Luke xiv. 16. Wisdom has her lordly house. "Seven pillars." The number is, of course, chosen, as throughout the O. T., for its mystical significance, as indicating completeness and perfection. God revealing Himself in nature, resting in His work, entering into covenant with men,—these were the ideas conveyed by it, and we cannot think of them as absent from the mind of the writer here.

2. *mingled her wine*] sc. with myrrh and other spices, heightening flavour and strength, as in Isai. v. 22.

3. The identity of the words with those of *v.* 14 is noticeable. Wisdom and the "foolish woman" of *v.* 13 speak from the same places and to the same class—the simple, undecided, wavering, standing at the diverging point of the two paths that lead to life or death.

5. Here again we have a parallelism to the higher teaching of the Gospels. Not for the first time, in John vi., or on the night of the Last Supper, had bread and wine been made the symbols of fellowship with Eternal Life and Truth. Comp. Isai. lv. 1.

7. The three verses 7—9, in their general preceptive form, seem somewhat to interrupt the continuity of the invitation which Wisdom utters. The order of thought is, however, this: "I speak to you, the simple, the open, ones, for you have yet ears to hear; but from the scorner or evil doer, as such, I turn away." The rules which govern human teachers, leading them to choose willing or fit disciples, are the laws also of the Divine Educator. So taken, the words are parallel to Matt. vii. 2, and find an illustration in the difference between our Lord's teaching to His disciples and to them that were without.

10. *the knowledge of the holy*] The word in the Heb. is plural, agreeing, probably, with *Elohim* understood. The same phrase meets us in the same sense in xxx. 3. The knowledge of the Most Holy One stands as the counterpart of the fear of Jehovah. See Note below.

13 ¶ [d] A foolish woman *is* clamorous: *she is* simple, and knoweth nothing.

14 For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city,

15 To call passengers who go right on their ways:

16 Whoso *is* simple, let him turn in hither: and *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

17 Stolen waters are sweet, and bread † *eaten* in secret is pleasant.

† Heb. *of secrecies.*

18 But he knoweth not that the dead *are* there; *and that* her guests *are* in the depths of hell.

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12. An assertion of the great law of personal retribution, "Whatever thou doest, thou, and none other, shalt reap the fruits of it." In the Greek version of the LXX. we find so curious an addition to this verse (one instance among many) that it is worth while to quote it, as shewing its variation from the Hebrew. "My son, if thou wilt be wise for thyself, thou shalt be wise aiso for thy neighbours; but if thou turn out evil, thou alone shalt bear evil. He who resteth on lies shall guide the winds, and the same shall hunt after winged birds; for he hath left the ways of his own vineyard, and has gone astray with the wheels of his own husbandry. He goeth through a wilderness without water, and over a land set in thirsty places, and with his hands he gathereth barrenness."

13. Once again, as we draw to the close of the first great division of the book, the picture of the harlot meets us as the representative of the sensuous life, the Folly between which and Wisdom the young man has to make his choice. "Simple," obviously in the worst sense of the word, as open to all forms of evil. "Knoweth nothing," ignorant, *i.e.* with the ignorance which is wilful and implies recklessness.

14. A certain scorn is traceable in the details of the contrast. The foolish woman has her house, but it is no stately palace with seven pillars, like the home of Wisdom. No train of maidens wait on her, and invite her guests, but she herself sits at the door, forcing herself into a position as prominent as that of Wisdom (comp. *v.* 14 with *v.* 3), counterfeiting her voice, making the same offer to the same class (comp. *v.* 16 with *v.* 4).

17. The words of the Temptress appeal to the besetting sin of all times and countries, the one great proof of the inherent corruption of man's nature. Pleasures are attractive *because* they are forbidden. "*Quod non licet acrius urit.*" "*Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata.*" "I had not known lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (Rom. vii. 7.)

18. As in ii. 18, the veil is drawn away, and behind the scene of voluptuousness is seen the world of the dead. The spectres of past transgressors haunt it. Perishing in their guilt, or losing their true life, they are already in the depths of Hades. No words can add anything to the awfulness of that warning, and with it the long introduction closes, and the collection of separate proverbs begins. Wisdom and Folly have each spoken; the issues of each have been painted in life-like hues. The learner is left to choose.

NOTE on CHAP. IX. 10.

The question is as to the meaning of דעת קדשים. (1) Is the genitive one of subject or object? (2) Is the plural to be taken strictly, and if so, of persons or things? (3) If taken collectively, or as a *pluralis majestatis*, of whom does it speak? According to the answers to these questions we get the interpretations.

(a) Knowledge such as belongs to the saints. So the LXX.: βουλὴ ἁγίων σύνεσις, and the Vulg.: scientia sanctorum prudentia.

(b) That given in the text, adopted by nearly all recent commentators, Rosenmüller, Ewald, Hitzig, Bertheau, Vaihinger, Maurer.

CHAPTER X.

From this chapter to the five and twentieth are sundry observations of moral virtues, and their contrary vices.

THE proverbs of Solomon. [a] A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.

[a] chap. 15. 20.

CHAP. X. **1.** At this point there is an obvious change in the character of the book. The continuous strain of exhortation ceases. The law of parallelism, or antithesis, between the two clauses is more distinctly marked. There is seldom any traceable connection between any two consecutive verses. We have simply a collection of maxims bearing, it is

2 [b] Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.

3 [c] The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away [1] the substance of the wicked.

4 [d] He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

5 He that gathereth in summer *is* a wise son: *but* he that sleepeth in harvest *is* a son that causeth shame.

6 Blessings *are* upon the head of the just: but [e] violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

7 [f] The memory of the just *is* blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.

8 The wise in heart will receive commandments: but [†] a prating fool [1] shall fall.

9 [g] He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

10 [h] He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: but a prating fool [1] shall fall.

11 [i] The mouth of a righteous *man is* a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

12 Hatred stirreth up strifes: but [k] love covereth all sins.

13 In the lips of him that hath

[b] chap. 11. 4. [c] Ps. 37. 25. [1] Or, *the wicked for their wickedness.* [d] chap. 12. 24. [e] ver. 11. [f] Ps. 112. 6. [†] Heb. *a fool of lips.* [1] Or, *shall be beaten.* [g] Ps. 23. 4. [h] chap. 6. 13. [1] Or, *shall be beaten.* [i] chap. 13. 14. [k] 1 Cor. 13. 4. 1 Pet. 4. 8.

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true, the impress of the same mind, applying the same principles, dealing with the same subjects, but with no formal arrangement. As regards the title, and the inference to be drawn from it, see Introduction.

2. Compare the "Male partum, male disperit," of Plautus, and the "Ill got, ill gone!" of our English proverb.

profit nothing] Probably with the same sense as in xi. 4, where the proverb is repeated with the addition "profit not *in the day of wrath.*"

righteousness] Includes, perhaps, the idea of benevolence. So the LXX. frequently render the word by ἐλεημοσύνη (Ps. xxxiii. 5; Isai. xxviii. 17). Comp. the use of δικαιοσύνη, in Matt. vi. 1 (the older reading), and 2 Cor. ix. 9, 10.

3. *casteth away the substance of the wicked*] Better, "overturns, disappoints the strong desire of the wicked." Tantalus-like, they never get the enjoyment they thirst after. The LXX. ζωὴν δὲ ἀσεβῶν ἀνατρέψει implies the reading חַיַּת for הַוַּת.

4. *slack*] The meaning seems required by the parallel clause, and is etymologically admissible, but the word is elsewhere translated as "deceitful" (Job xiii. 7; Ps. cxx. 2, 3; Hos. vii. 16; Jer. xlviii. 10). The two thoughts run easily into each other. In Jer. xlviii. 10, "negligently" appears in the margin of the A.V. as an alternative rendering.

5. *summer*] The use of the word "son" in both clauses implies that the work of the vinedresser and the plough had been done by the father. All that the son is called to do is to enter on the labours of others, and reap where they have sown. To sleep when the plenteous harvest lies ready for the sickle is the extremest sloth.

6. *covereth the mouth of the wicked*] The full force of this phrase is perhaps lost to us. The violence which the wicked has done is as a bandage over his mouth, reducing him to a silence and shame, like that of the leper (Lev. xiii. 45; Mic. iii. 7) or the condemned criminal (Esth. vii. 8), whose "face is covered." By some commentators the order of the words is inverted and we get "the mouth of the wicked covereth violence." (Bertheau.)

8. *a prating fool*] Lit. **The fool of lips**; on the one side, the inward self-contained wisdom, on the other, the uttered, self-exposed folly are brought before us.

shall fall] Better, **shall be chastised.**

9. *shall be known*] Lit. "shall be made to know" (see Jer. xxxi. 19; Judg. viii. 16). The LXX. and Vulg. agree in giving "shall be known," *i.e.* exposed.

10. There is a significance in the repetition of the same maxim in the latter clause, as in that of *v.* 8, with a different beginning. There the relation between the two clauses was one of contrast, here of resemblance. He who winks with his eyes, cunning, reticent, deceitful (as in vi. 13). brings sorrow to himself and others. This abuse of speech, no less than the garrulity of "the fool of lips," brings its own penalty.

11. Here, again, the latter clause is a repetition, and its literal meaning is more appropriate than in *v.* 6. Streams of living water flow from the mouth of the righteous, but that of the wicked is "covered," *i.e.* stopped and put to silence by their own violence.

well of life] Not, as the words might suggest to our thoughts, "a well of water that gives life," but identical with the "fountain of living waters" of Jer. ii. 13, xvii. 13, and the "living water" of John iv. 10,

understanding wisdom is found: but a rod *is* for the back of him that is void of [1]understanding.

14 Wise *men* lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.

18. 15 [l]The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city: the destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.

16 The labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.

17 He *is in* the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof [1]erreth.

18 He that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, *is* a fool.

[1] Or, *causeth to err.*

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11. The phrase reappears in Rev. xxii. 1, in the description of the New Jerusalem.

12. *love covereth all sins*] The meaning here is obviously, as determined by the other clause, and as in Ps. xxxii. 1, love covers, *i.e.* first hides, does not expose, and then forgives and forgets all sins. As such, it helps to determine the meaning of James v. 20; 1 Pet. iv. 8, where the use of the word "charity" in the A.V. hinders the English reader from recognizing the identity. It may be noticed that St Peter follows the Hebrew, and not the LXX. The latter follows a different text, and give *πάντας δὲ τοὺς μὴ φιλονεικοῦντας καλύψει φιλία.*

13. The contrast between good and evil is carried further. "The wisdom of the wise is seen in the words that issue from his lips; the folly of the fool is not only seen in his speech, but brings upon him the chastisement which he well deserves." School experiences would probably give a special force to the words to the young disciple for whom the book was in the first instance intended. Comp. the Egyptian proverb: "A youth has a back that he may attend to his teacher," quoted in note on Exod. ii. 11.

14. *lay up*] The point of the maxim is not that the wise man acquires knowledge, but that he is reticent, cautious, frugal in displaying it, storing what will endure and be precious, reserving what he has to say for the right time, place, and persons (comp. Matt. vii. 6), as contrasted with the mouth of the foolish, ever giving immediate utterance to what destroys himself and others.

near destruction] The words are strictly the predicate of the sentence, "as for the mouth of the foolish destruction is near," sc. "is like an impending ruin, ready at any moment to fall."

15. *destruction*] The word has its full meaning, as that which crushes, throws into ruins, and is thus the direct antithesis to the impregnability of the "strong city" in the first clause. While the main lessons of the book lead men to seek the treasure which is above all gold or silver, the facts of human society are not ignored. Wealth secures its possessors against many dangers; poverty exposes men to worse evils than itself, meanness, servility and cowardice. Below the surface there lies, it may be, a grave irony. The rich man, trusting in his riches, is tempted to make them his strong city, to have no other tower of strength. Comp. xviii. 11, where the meaning, latent here, is brought out distinctly.

16. May we not see in this a warning against the conclusion which men of lower natures might draw from the facts stated in the previous verse, the lesson that

"Quærenda pecunia primum est;
Virtus post nummos!"
Horace, 'Ep.' I. i. 53.

Such an inference is met by the law, as much a fact of experience as the other, that while wealth gotten by honest industry (the Hebrew word includes the result, as well as the process of labour) is not only, like inherited riches, a defence, but also a blessing, the seeming **profit** (this represents the Heb. more accurately than fruit) of the wicked tends to further sin (1 Tim. vi. 10), and so to punishment. Comp. Rom. vi. 21.

17. The words admit of various constructions, either, as in the A.V., or lit. **A way of life is he that keepeth instruction.** The verb in the second clause is better taken, as in the margin, transitively, **causeth to err**, and in this sense corresponds to the interpretation of the first clause, which asserts that the wise guide others to a true life. In each case the influence for good or evil spreads beyond the man himself.

18. Better, **He who hideth hatred is of lying lips.** The alternative is offered with a delicate touch of irony. He who cherishes hatred must choose between being a knave, or a fool—a knave if he hides, a fool if he utters it. The A.V. misses this antithesis by making "fool" the predicate of both clauses, and so losing at once the force and the rhythmical parallelism of the proverb. See Note below.

19. By some commentators this is rendered "Sin shall not cease," &c. Many words do not mend a fault. Silence on the part both of the reprover and the offender is often better. The A.V. is, however, preferable.

19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

20 The tongue of the just *is as* choice silver: the heart of the wicked *is* little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want †of wisdom.

† Heb. *of heart.*

22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

23 [m] *It is* as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

m chap. 14. 9.

24 The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

25 As the whirlwind passeth, so *is* the wicked no *more:* but the righteous *is* an everlasting foundation.

26 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so *is* the sluggard to them that send him.

27 [n] The fear of the LORD †prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

n chap. 9. 11. † Heb. *addeth.*

28 The hope of the righteous *shall be* gladness: but the [o] expectation of the wicked shall perish.

o Job 8. 13. & 11. 20. Ps. 112. 10.

29 The way of the LORD *is* strength to the upright: but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

30 [p] The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

p Ps. 37. 22 & 125. 1.

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20. The antithesis runs through every word of both clauses. The tongue, the instrument of the mind is contrasted with the heart or mind itself, the just with the wicked, the choice silver with the worthless "little." In each case there is implied an *à fortiori* argument. If the tongue is precious, how much more the mind! If the heart is worthless, how much more the speech!

little] The Hebrew word is possibly taken in its primary sense as a "filing" or "scraping" of dross or worthless metal.

21. *feed*] The word, like the Greek ποιμαίνειν, includes the idea of guiding as well as nourishing; doing a shepherd's work in both.

want of wisdom] Better, **through him who wanteth understanding.** The latter clause, like the former, refers to a person, rather than an abstract quality. Comp. this use of the same phrase in vi. 32, vii. 7, ix. 4, and x. 13. The wise guide others to safety; the fool, empty-headed, and empty-hearted, involves others like himself in destruction.

22. The cares and troubles that attend the rich in this world are tacitly contrasted with the abiding cheerfulness of the man who has the blessing of Jehovah, and who therefore receives his wealth without the addition of the trouble which hinders its enjoyment. Comp. Eccles. v. 19.

23. The maxim gains perhaps more point if we take the words "It is as sport" as the predicate of both clauses. The fool finds his sport in doing mischief, the man of understanding finds in wisdom his truest refreshment and delight. The construction of the A.V. is, however, quite tenable.

24. *The fear*] sc. the thing feared. The phrase and the thought find a parallel in Job iii. 25, xv. 21.

shall be granted] The verb as it stands in the text is active. **He giveth the desire of the righteous.** The Giver in this case is Jehovah.

25. *As the whirlwind*] The conjunction is perhaps better taken (with the LXX. παραπορευομένης καταιγίδος) of time, **when the whirlwind is passing, then the wicked is no more.** The proverb, so taken, contains the germ of the parable at the close of the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. vii. 24—27. In the later Rabbinic interpretation the second clause was applied to the Messiah as being the Just One, the Everlasting Foundation, on whom the world was established. (Schoettgen, 'Hor. Heb.' II. 19.)

26. Perhaps the nearest approach in the whole book to the humorous. The teeth set on edge by vinegar, or the sour wine used by peasants (Ruth ii. 14; Ps. lxix. 21), the eye irritated by wood-smoke, these shadow out the vexation and annoyance of having to do with a messenger who *will* loiter on the way.

28. It would be better for "hope" and "expectation" to change places. Even the expectant waiting of the righteous is joyful at the time, and ends in joy: the eager hope of the wicked comes to nought. Comp. Job viii. 13.

29. Here again the insertion of the words "shall be" in the wrong place weakens the force. As in *v.* 23 (according to the construction adopted in the note), there is one antecedent and two consequents: "The Way of Jehovah," *i.e.* the Divine Order of the world, has its two sides. It is "strength to the upright, destruction to the workers of iniquity."

31 The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked *speaketh* † frowardness.

† Heb. *frowardnesses.*

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30. *the wicked shall not inhabit*] The other and higher side of the same law of the Divine Government appears in the beatitude of Matt. v. 5, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth."

31. *bringeth forth*, &c.] As a tree full of life and sap brings forth its fruit. So in Isai. lvii. 19, the cognate word is translated "the fruit of the lips."

shall be cut out] The metaphor of the first clause is perhaps continued. The "froward tongue" is like a tree that brings forth evil and not good fruit. "Shall be cut down." What is meant is, that the abuse of God's gift of speech will lead ultimately to its forfeiture. There shall, at last, be the silence of shame and confusion.

32. *know what is acceptable*] sc. "know, and *therefore* utter." So, in like manner, the "mouth of the wicked" **knows**, and therefore speaks frowardness, and that only.

NOTE on Chap. x. 18.

The LXX. rendering, Καλύπτουσιν ἔχθραν χείλη δίκαια, which implies a reading צדק for שקר, gives a better sense, and is adopted by Ewald.

CHAPTER XI.

A[a] † FALSE balance *is* abomination to the Lord: but † a just weight *is* his delight.

2 [b] *When* pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly *is* wisdom.

3 [c] The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

4 [d] Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall † direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but [e] transgressors shall be taken in *their own* naughtiness.

7 When a wicked man dieth, *his* expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust *men* perisheth.

8 [f] The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

[a] Lev. 19. 36. Deut. 25. 15. chap. 16. 11. & 20. 10, 23.
† Heb. *Balances of deceit.*
† Heb. *a perfect stone.*
[b] chap. 15. 33. & 16. 18. & 18. 12.
[c] chap. 13. 6.
[d] chap. 10. 2. Ezek. 7. 19. Zeph. 1. 18.
† Heb. *rectify.*
[e] chap. 5. 22.
[f] chap. 21. 18.

Chap. XI. 1. In this emphatic reproduction of the old rule of Deut. xxv. 13, 14, we may find, perhaps, a trace, as in vi. 1, of the growing commerce of the Israelites, and the danger of dishonesty incidental to it. While the words have a wider range, and include all unequal, unrighteous judgments, there can be no doubt that the literal meaning is the prominent one. The stress laid on the same sin in xvi. 11, xx. 10, bears witness to the desire of the teacher to educate the youth of Israel to a high standard of integrity, just as the protest of Hosea against it (xii. 7) shews the zeal of the prophet in rebuking what was becoming more and more a besetting sin.

a just weight] Lit. "a perfect stone," indicates a time when stones rather than metal were used as a standard of weight. Comp. Deut. xxv. 13. In 2 S. xiv. 26, the "king's *stone*," appears as regulating the weight even of the shekel.

2. Trite as the words now are, the appearance in many languages of the same maxim points to the delight with which men have in all ages welcomed this statement of a fact of general experience, in which they saw also a proof of a divine government. A Rabbinic paraphrase of the latter clause is worth quoting: "Lowly souls become full of wisdom as the low place becomes full of water."

4. *the day of wrath*] While the words are true in their highest sense of the great "dies iræ" of the future, they speak in the first instance, as do the like words in Zeph. i. 15—18, of *any* "day of the Lord," any time of judgment, when men or nations receive the chastisement of their sins. At such a time "riches profit not."

7. The words are significant, as shewing the belief that when the righteous died his expectation (sc. his hope for the future) did *not* perish. Comp. Wisd. iii. 18. The second clause might be better rendered, "the expectation that brings sorrow." See Note below.

[g] Job 8. 13.

9 [g] An hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

10 When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, *there is* shouting.

11 By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

† Heb. *destitute of heart.*

12 He that is † void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.

† Heb. *He that walketh,* being *a talebearer.*

13 † A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

[h] 1 Kings 12. 1.

14 [h] Where no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellers *there is* safety.

15 He that is surety for a stranger † shall smart *for it:* and he that hateth † suretiship is sure.

† Heb. *shall be sore broken.*
† Heb. *those that strike hands.*

16 A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong *men* retain riches.

17 The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but *he that is* cruel troubleth his own flesh.

18 The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness *shall be* a sure reward.

19 As righteousness *tendeth* to life: so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it* to his own death.

20 They that are of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD: but *such as are* upright in *their* way *are* his delight.

21 *Though* hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

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9. Another, and on the whole preferable construction, gives, **By the knowledge of the just, shall they** (sc. the neighbours) **be delivered.**

11. *the blessing of the upright*] sc. probably the prayers which he offers for the good of the city in which he dwells, and which avail to preserve it from destruction. Comp. Gen. xviii. 23—33. The words admit, however, with equal facility the meaning "the prosperity of the upright," sc. "the blessing which God gives them."

12. The precept deals with the outward shew rather than the root-evil. None but the man "void of wisdom" will shew contempt for those about him. The wise man, if he cannot admire or praise, will at least know how to be silent.

13. Reticence is commended from another point of view. The man who comes to us with tales about others will reveal our secrets also. Faithfulness is shewn, not only in doing what a man has been commissioned to do, but in doing it quietly and without garrulity.

14. *counsel*] As in i. 5, the power to steer, or guide. True at all times, this precept may well be thought of as coming with a special force and freshness at the time of the organization of the monarchy of Israel, when the king called together his experienced ministers to hold a council. Comp. 1 K. xii. 6.

15. The second warning, following on vi. 1, against the besetting danger of the time. The marginal "those that strike hands" for "suretiship," refers to the outward sign of the compact noticed in vi. 1. The play upon "sure" and "suretiship" in the A.V. (though each word is rightly rendered) has nothing corresponding to it in the Hebrew, and seems to have originated in a desire to give point to the proverb.

16. *retaineth honour*] The Hebrew includes the idea of gaining as well as keeping, and the second clause illustrates the first. "The gracious woman wins and keeps honour, *as* (the conjunction may be so rendered) strong men win riches."

18. *deceitful work*] The idea expressed is not that of a fraudulent act deceiving others, but of one which deceives and disappoints the worker. So taken, it is contrasted with the "sure reward" of the second clause.

shall be] The words had better be omitted, and the verb "worketh" taken as belonging to both clauses.

21. The Italics shew the original structure, "hand to hand," which leaves room for three interpretations: (1) as in the A.V. and LXX., "Hand may plight faith to hand, men may confederate for evil, yet punishment shall come at last;" or (2) "From hand to hand, from one generation to another, punishment shall descend on the evildoers;" or (3) "Be sure of this, as if hand were clasped in hand as a pledge of its truth." (So Ewald and Hitzig.) Of these that adopted by the A.V. is the simplest, while (2) gives a better antithesis to the second clause, and both are preferable to (3).

22. The most direct proverb, in the sense of *mashal*, or "similitude," which has as yet met us.

22 *As* a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, *so is* a fair woman which †is without discretion.

23 The desire of the righteous *is* only good: *but* the expectation of the wicked *is* wrath.

24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, but *it tendeth* to poverty.

25 [i]†The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

26 He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing *shall be* upon the head of him that selleth *it*.

27 He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: [k]but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

28 He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but [l]the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

29 He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool *shall be* servant to the wise of heart.

30 The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and he that †winneth souls *is* wise.

31 [m]Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.

[k] Ps. 7. 15, 16. & 9. 15, 16. & 10. 2. & 57. 6.
[l] Ps. 1. 3. & 92. 12, &c. Jer. 17. 8.
† Heb. *taketh*.
[m] 1 Pet. 4. 18.

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jewel of gold] Better, **ring**; sc. the nose-ring, then, as now, a favourite ornament of Eastern beauties (Gen. xxiv. 22, 47, and comp. Isai. iii. 21).

without discretion] Lit. "without taste," void of the subtle tact and grace, without which mere outward beauty is as ill-bestowed as the nose-ring, not on a fair woman's face, but in the snout of the unclean beast. If we may assume that in ancient Syria, as in modern Europe, swine commonly wore such a ring to hinder the mischief which they might otherwise do to gardens or vineyards, the similitude receives a fresh vividness.

24. *withholdeth more than is meet*] sc. is sparing and niggardly where he ought to give. The contrast is stated in the form of a paradox, almost of a riddle, to which the two following verses supply the answer. The particle here rendered as a comparative may however be taken in its primary meaning, "There is that withholdeth from what is due," sc. from a just debt, or from the generosity of a just man. (So Rosenmüller.)

25. *liberal soul*] Lit. "the soul that blesses," sc. gives freely and fully. Compare the use of "blessing" in 2 K. v. 15, and of εὐλογία in 2 Cor. ix. 5. The similitudes are both of them essentially Eastern. Fatness, the sleek, well-filled look of health, becomes the figure of prosperity, as leanness is of misfortune (xiii. 4, xxviii. 25; Ps. xxii. 29; Isai. x. 16). Kindly acts come as the refreshing dew and soft rain from heaven upon a thirsty land.

26. The general contrast of the preceding verse is here seen, in a special instance, in its highest form. In the early stages of commerce there seems no way of making money rapidly so sure as that of buying up corn in time of dearth, waiting till the dearth presses heavily, and then selling at famine prices. Modern political economy may have taught us that even here the selfishness of the individual does, in the long run, by limiting consumption, and maintaining a reserve, promote the general good; but it is no less true that men hate the selfishness, and pour blessings upon him who sells at a moderate profit. Our own laws against forestalling and regrating, schemes for a maximum price of bread, as in the famines of the French Revolution, histories like that of M. Manlius, legends like that of Bishop Hatto and the rats, are tokens of the universality of the feeling.

27. *procureth*] Better, **striveth after**.

favour] may be that of God or man, or may include both. In either case, the meaning is, that he who desires good, absolutely, for its own sake, is also unconsciously striving after the favour which attends goodness.

28. *branch*] Better, **leaf**, as in Ps. i. 3; Isai. xxxiv. 4.

29. *He that troubleth his own house*] The words point specially to the temper, niggardly and worrying, which leads a man to make those about him miserable, and, as the proverb says, proves but bad economy in the end.

30. *winneth souls*] Better, **a wise man winneth souls**. There does not seem any ground for seeing in these words the meaning which "winning souls" for God, or Christ, has gained in Christian language. What is dwelt on is the power of wisdom, as we say, to win the *hearts* of men. He that is wise draws the souls of men to himself, just as the fruit of the righteous is to all around him a tree of life, bearing new fruits of healing evermore. It is to be noted also that the phrase here rendered "winneth souls" is the same as that which elsewhere is translated by "taketh the life" (1 K. xix. 4; Ps. xxxi. 13). The wise man is the true conqueror.

31. The words "recompensed" and "much

more" are not without difficulty. There does not seem to be any adequate meaning in the thought, "Virtue shall be rewarded in the earth, much more shall vice be punished." It is better to take the word in both clauses as *in malam partem.* "The righteous is requited, sc. is punished for his lesser sins, or as a discipline; much more the wicked." (So the Jewish interpreters, followed by Rosenmüller, and Bertheau.) Thus taken it corresponds more closely with the LXX. translation, quoted in 1 Pet. iv. 18, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" The word in itself neutral is, however, used in a good sense in xiii. 13, and is so taken by Hitzig.

NOTE on CHAP. XI. 7.

The word אוֹנִים, rendered "unjust men," is translated "power" in Job xviii. 7; Isai. xl. 26, as the plural of אוֹן. And from this two meanings have been got, (1) "the expectation of his strength" (Ben Gerson): (2) taking the word as in Gen. xlix. 3, "the expectation of his children" (Jarchi). The A.V. takes it as the plural of אָוֶן, in the sense of "wickedness" (Rosenmüller, and the LXX.); Ewald, from the same word, in the sense of "sorrow," as in Hos. ix. 4 (so Fürst and the Vulg.).

CHAPTER XII.

WHOSO loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof *is* brutish.

2 A good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

3 A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the [a]root of the righteous shall not be moved.

4 [b]A virtuous woman *is* a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed *is* as rottenness in his bones.

5 The thoughts of the righteous *are* right: *but* the counsels of the wicked *are* deceit.

6 [c]The words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

7 [d]The wicked are overthrown, and *are* not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.

8 A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is [†]of a perverse heart shall be despised.

9 *He that is* despised, and hath a

[a] chap. 10. 25.
[b] 1 Cor. 11. 7.
[c] chap. 1. 11, 18.
[d] Ps. 37. 37. chap. 11. 21.
[†] Heb. *perverse of heart.*

CHAP. XII. 1. *brutish*] Dumb as a brute beast. Trite as the words seem they point to a deep law in the philosophy of human history. The difference between man and brute lies chiefly in the capacity of the former for progress and improvement, and that capacity depends upon his willingness to submit to discipline and education. Comp. Ps. xlix. 12.

2. *of wicked devices*] The Heb. gives the substantive only, but takes it with the idea of evil attached to it. The "man of plots" or "devices" is likely to have sinister ends in view.

4. *A virtuous woman*] The word implies the virtue of earnestness, or strength of character, rather than of simple chastity. The word occurs in Ruth iii. 11, the full description of the character in ch. xxxi.

a crown] We have to remember that the "crown" was with the Jews the sign, not of kingly power only, but also of joy and gladness. Comp. S. of S. iii. 11.

5. The stress lies upon the words "thoughts" or "purposes" (xv. 22) and "counsels." Habits of good and evil reach beyond the region of outward act to that of impulse and volition.

6. *shall deliver them*] The law of parallelism leaves it open to us to refer the pronoun either to the righteous themselves, or to those, the unwary and innocent, for whom the words of the wicked lie in wait as robbers ready to plunder. Of the two interpretations the former seems preferable.

9. The meaning is not quite clear, and we have to choose between two interpretations, each equally tenable grammatically, according to the view we take of the facts of human life; (1) as in the A.V., He whom men despise, or who is "lowly" in his own eyes (the word is used by David of himself, 1 S. xviii. 23), the trader, the peasant, if he has a slave, sc. if he is one step above absolute poverty, and has some one to supply his wants, is

servant, *is* better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.

10 A righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beast: but the [1]tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.

[1] Or, *bowels.*

11 [e]He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain *persons is* void of understanding.

[e] chap. 28. 19.

12 The wicked desireth [1]the net of evil *men:* but the root of the righteous yieldeth *fruit.*

[1] Or, *the fortress.*

13 [†][f]The wicked is snared by the transgression of *his* lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.

[†] Heb. *The snare of the wicked is in the transgression of lips.*
[f] chap. 18. 7.

14 [g]A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth: and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

[g] chap. 13. 2.

15 [h]The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel *is* wise.

[h] chap. 3. 7.

16 A fool's wrath is [†]presently known: but a prudent *man* covereth shame.

[†] Heb. *in that day.*

17 [i]*He that* speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

[i] chap. 14. 5.

18 [k]There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise *is* health.

[k] Ps. 57. 4. & 59. 7.

19 The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue *is* but for a moment.

20 Deceit *is* in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellers of peace *is* joy.

21 There shall no evil happen to

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better off than the man who boasts of rank or descent and has nothing to eat. Respectable mediocrity is better than boastful poverty. (2) He who, though despised, is a servant to himself, *i.e.* supplies his own wants (as in the Vulg. "sufficiens sibi"), is better than the arrogant and helpless. The first interpretation gives the same view of what is to be desired in life as xxx. 8, and is adopted by Rosenmüller and Bertheau; the second is in harmony with *v.* 11, and is followed by the LXX., the Jewish interpreters (Jarchi and Aben-Ezra), and by Hitzig and Ewald.

10. *regardeth*] Lit. "knoweth." The A.V. gives the right application, but the words remind us that all true sympathy and care must grow out of knowledge. The righteous man tries to *know* the feelings and life even of the brute beast, and so comes to care for it. It may be worth while to note, in connection with this recognition of a duty which other ethical systems for the most part pass over, (1) that it rests upon direct commandments in the Law (Exod. xx. 10, xxiii. 4, 5); (2) that it connects itself with the thought that the mercies of God are over all His works, and that man's mercy, in proportion to its excellence, must be like His (Jonah iv. 11); and (3) that it has perpetuated its influence in the popular morality of the East. Hospitals for sick dogs, and the like, may be traced to this feeling as their source.

tender mercies] Better, "the feelings, the emotions," all that should have led to mercy and pity towards man. The circle expands in the one case, narrows in the other.

11. The contrast is carried on between the life of industry and that of the vagrant, idle, "vain person" of the "baser sort" (the "Raca" of Matt. v. 22). We might have expected that the antithesis of the second clause would have ended with "shall lack bread," but the real contrast goes deeper. Idleness leads to a worse evil than that of hunger.

12. The words are somewhat obscure both in the original and the translation. The meaning, however, seems as follows. The "net of evil men," as in i. 17, is that in which they are taken, the judgment of God in which they are ensnared. This they run into with such a blind infatuation, that it seems as if they were in love with their own destruction. The marginal "fortress" (a meaning given to the feminine form in Isai. xxix. 7; Ezek. xix. 9) gives the thought that the wicked seek the protection of others like themselves, but seek in vain; the "root of the just" (*i.e.* that in them which is fixed and stable) alone yields that protection. The latter rendering is, on the whole, preferable. See Note below.

16. Yet another point of contrast. The "fool" cannot restrain his wrath; it rushes on "presently" (as in the margin, **on the same day**), however uselessly. The prudent man knows that to utter his indignation at reproach and shame will but lead to a fresh attack, and takes refuge in reticence.

17. The words read at first almost like a truism, but the thought which lies below the surface is that of the inseparable union between truth and justice. The end does not justify the means, and only he who breathes and utters truth makes the righteous cause clear.

19. *for a moment*] Literally, "till I have

the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.

22 Lying lips *are* abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly *are* his delight.

[l] chap. 13. 16. & 15. 2.

23 [l] A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

[m] chap. 10. 4.

[1] Or, *deceitful.*

24 [m] The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the [1] slothful shall be under tribute.

[n] chap. 15. 13.

25 [n] Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.

[1] Or, *abundant.*

26 The righteous *is* more [1] excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

27 The slothful *man* roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man *is* precious.

28 In the way of righteousness *is* life; and *in* the pathway *thereof there is* no death.

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winked," the phrase coming to be used adverbially for an indefinitely short time.

20. Both clauses point to results as well as causes. The "deceit" of "those who imagine evil" can work nothing but evil to those whom they advise. The "counsellors of peace" have joy in themselves, and impart it to others also.

23. Another aspect of the truth of x. 14. The wise is not quick to utter even the wisdom which deserves utterance. He broods over it, tests it, lives by it. The fool, whose "heart" is in his mouth, "proclaimeth," speaks as from the housetops, whatever comes uppermost, however foolish and contemptible it may be.

24. *under tribute*] The comparison is suggested by the contrast common in most ancient monarchies in the East, between the condition of a conquered race, compelled to pay heavy taxes in money or in kind (like the Canaanites in Israel, Josh. xvi. 10; Judg. i. 30—33), and that of the freedom of their conquerors from such burdens. The proverb indicates that beyond all political divisions of this nature there lies an ethical law. The "slothful" descend inevitably to pauperism and servitude. The prominence of this compulsory labour under Solomon (1 K. ix. 21) gives a special significance to the illustration.

25. The verse, though easy enough in the English, presents some special difficulties in the original. See Note below.

26. *is more excellent than*] The meaning of the Hebrew is doubtful, but there is something like a *consensus* of recent commentators in favour of the rendering, **the just man guides his neighbour.** This, it will be seen at once, gives a better antithesis to the second clause.

27. The word rendered "roasteth" occurs nowhere else, and its meaning is therefore doubtful. The sense "roasting" rests on the meaning of a cognate Chaldee word, translated "singed" in Dan. iii. 27, and represents the interpretation both of older Jewish commentators, and of many recent scholars (Ewald). Others (Rosenmüller, Maurer, Gesenius) render the first clause thus: "The slothful man will not *secure* (keep in his net) what he takes in hunting," sc. will let whatever he gains slip from his hands through want of effort and attention. So the LXX. οὐκ ἐπιτεύξεται θήραν.

28. See Note below.

NOTES on CHAP. XII. 12, 25, 28.

12. The word מְצוֹד unmistakeably means "nets" in Eccles. vii. 26, and its feminine form, מְצוֹדָה, has the same meaning in Eccles. ix. 12 and elsewhere. On the other hand, it has as unmistakeably the sense of "fortress" or "bulwark" in Eccles. ix. 14 and Isai. xxix. 7. The LXX. gives the word that meaning (αἱ δὲ ῥίζαι τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐν ὀχυρώμασιν), but connects it differently. The Vulg. gives, "Desiderium impii munimentum est malorum." The A.V. is supported by Ewald. Rosenmüller paraphrases, "The wicked desire that evil men should be strengthened." The latter clause is also difficult. The verb יִתֵּן stands without an object. This the A.V. supplies from the idea implied in the subject "root." Maurer inserts "defence or protection," from the first clause. Rosenmüller supplies "God" as "subject," and makes "the root of the just" the accusative governed by the verb.

25. The Hebrew text presents two difficulties: (1) that לב "the heart," which is elsewhere masculine, is made the object of a verb with a feminine suffix, ה ׳. (2) that דאגה, which is feminine, is joined with a masculine verb. Umbreit and Hitzig, following Jewish interpreters, avoid the grammatical anomalies by a somewhat forced construction. "If there is sorrow in the heart of a man, he makes it stoop, sc. represses

and crushes it down." Most commentators, however, suppose that the writer may have had נפש in his mind instead of לב; or that לב itself, as may be inferred from the form of its plural לבות, may at one time have been a common noun, and treated therefore as a feminine, and they accordingly accept the rendering of the LXX., Vulg. and A.V.

28. The rendering of the A.V. "there is no death" assumes that אַל מָוֶת can be taken as equivalent to לֹא מָוֶת, as the predicate of the sentence; and this use of the conjunction אַל which commonly, like the Latin "ne," is employed only in dependent sentences, though rare, is recognized by Rosenmüller, Fürst, Ewald and others. The combination אַלְקוּם in Prov. xxx. 31, for "irresistible" ("against whom there is no rising up"), presents an analogous instance. The exceptional character of the phrase, however, seems to have led to the various reading אֶל (= ad), and this is traceable in the LXX. εἰς θάνατον, and the Vulg. "iter devium ducit ad mortem." On this view, which Hitzig adopts, נתיבה is taken *in malam partem* for a "by-path."

CHAPTER XIII.

A WISE son *heareth* his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

2 [a] A man shall eat good by the fruit of *his* mouth: but the soul of the transgressors *shall eat* violence.

3 He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

4 The soul of the sluggard desireth, and *hath* nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

5 A righteous *man* hateth lying: but a wicked *man* is loathsome, and cometh to shame.

6 [b] Righteousness keepeth *him that is* upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth [†] the sinner.

7 There is that maketh himself rich, yet *hath* nothing: *there is* that maketh himself poor, yet *hath* great riches.

8 The ransom of a man's life *are* his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.

9 The light of the righteous rejoiceth: [c] but the [‖] lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

a ch. 12. 14.
b chap. 11. 3, 5, 6.
† Heb. *sin.*
c Job 18. 6 & 21. 17.
‖ Or, *candle.*

CHAP. XIII. **1.** *heareth*] It will be seen by the italics in the A.V. that there is no word corresponding to this in the Hebrew, and hence some have tried to get a meaning without it: "A wise son is taught by his father," or (2) "A wise son *is* the instruction of his father," is what he is through it, embodies it. The insertion of the verb of the second clause in the first is however quite legitimate, just as in the next verse that of the first is inserted in the second. Stress is laid on the obstinacy of the scorner refusing to hear, not "instruction" only, but the much stronger "rebuke."

2. As in xii. 14. "The fruit of the mouth," speech rightly used, is itself good, and must therefore bring good fruit.

eat violence] sc. brings upon itself repayment in kind for its deeds of evil.

5. *is loathsome*] The verb may have either the transitive meaning, "does shameful deeds," or the intransitive, "is put to shame." The A.V. adopts the latter, but changes the word to "loathsome," to avoid repetition. The Vulg. "confundit et confundetur," is epigrammatic enough to deserve notice, but has nothing corresponding to it in the Hebrew.

7. One of the proverbs in which there is probably one meaning on the surface and another below. At first it seems, like xii. 9, to sketch two forms of self-contradicting character, simulated wealth concealing poverty, simulated poverty concealing great wealth. But the teaching of xi. 24 finds its echo here. There is a seeming wealth behind which there lies a deep spiritual poverty and wretchedness. There is a poverty which makes a man rich for the kingdom of God.

8. Here again there is an enigmatic paradox. On the one side is put the seeming advantage of wealth. The rich man gets out of many troubles, escapes often from a just retribution, by his money. His riches are his ransom. But then the poor man in his turn is free from the risk of the threats and litigation that beset the rich. He "hears no rebuke," not in the sense in which the words are used in *v.* 1, but as the dead "hear not the voice of the oppressor" (Job iii. 18), or the abuse of the envious. "Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator." Other interpretations are (1) "the poor, though, having no other resource, he ought to hear rebuke, too commonly neglects it," and (2) "he who heareth not rebuke becomes poor;" but the first interpretation is, it is believed, the best.

9. Very beautiful in its poetry (analogous to the thought which pervades the 'Paradiso'

10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.

11 [d]Wealth *gotten* by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth [†]by labour shall increase.

d chap. 10. 2. & 20. 21.
† Heb. *with the hand.*

12 Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but *when* the desire cometh, *it is* a tree of life.

13 Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment [‖]shall be rewarded.

‖ Or, *shall be in peace.*

14 [e]The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

e chap. 14. 27.

15 Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors *is* hard.

16 [f]Every prudent *man* dealeth with knowledge: but a fool [†]layeth open *his* folly.

f chap. 12. 23. & 15. 2.
† Heb. *spreadeth.*

17 A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador *is* health.

18 Poverty and shame *shall be to* him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

19 The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but *it is* abomination to fools to depart from evil.

20 He that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: but a companion of fools [†]shall be destroyed.

† Heb. *shall be broken.*

21 Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repayed.

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of Dante) is the idea of the light *rejoicing* in its brightness. Nature itself, the sun in its glory (Ps. xix. 5), the stars in their courses (Job xxxviii. 7), sing for joy and rejoice. The distinction between the "light" and the "lamp" is also not without significance. The righteous have the true light in them. That which belongs to the wicked is but derived and temporary, and shall be extinguished before long. Compare a like distinction in John i. 8, and v. 35.

10. The A.V. order of words answers closely to the Hebrew, but there is some uncertainty what word the "only" qualifies. We may have (1) "By pride alone comes contention"—that is the one unfailing spring of quarrels; or (2) "By pride comes contention only"—it, and it alone, is the fruit of pride. The latter construction is preferable.

11. The words admit of three renderings: (1) That of the A.V. "Wealth gotten by vanity," *i.e.* by a windfall, or sudden stroke of fortune, not by honest labour, is soon diminished; or (2) wealth is diminished by vanity, by empty and hollow ostentation; or (3) wealth is diminished quicker than a breath. Of these, (1) is believed to be the best. In any case, the general meaning seems to be that the mere possession of riches is as nothing; they come and go, but the power to gain by skill of hand is everything.

by labour] Lit. "by the hand," with three possible meanings: (1) as in the A.V.; (2) "in proportion to his strength" (Ewald); (3) "in due measure" (Hitzig).

12. *when the desire cometh*] sc. when the object of our desires is attained. The omission of the conjunction in the Heb. makes the statement more emphatic. **The desire comes, it is a tree of life.** Comp. iii. 18.

13. *shall be rewarded*] The margin, "shall be in peace," follows the LXX. and Vulgate, but the text of the A.V. is unquestionably right.

14. *snares of death*] The phrase occurs in Ps. xviii. 5. Comp. "laquei mortis" (Hor. 'Od.' III. xxiv. 8).

15. *hard*] The primary meaning of the word is that of permanence. This may be applied either to (1) running streams; or (2) stagnant pools; or (3) as in the A.V. here, and in Deut. xxi. 4; Mic. vi. 2, to the hard dry rock. The contrast is expressive in either case; but (3), that of the A.V., is the best supported. In either case, the idea is that of the barren dry soil, or the impassable marsh, in contrast with the fountain of life, carrying joy and refreshment with it.

19. The connection, whether of contrast or resemblance, is somewhat obscure. Most probably the first clause states the general law which explains the fact stated in the second, "Satisfied desire is pleasant, *therefore* it is an abomination to fools to depart from the evil on which their minds are set." Another view of the passage makes the relation one of contrast: "Sweet is the satisfaction of desire, yet the wicked will not depart from the evil which makes that satisfaction impossible."

20. *a companion of fools*] Better, **one who goeth after fools shall be destroyed.** The same word in xi. 15 is rendered, "shall smart for it." According to various derivations it has been translated as above, or as "shall become like them" (Vulg.), "shall be made evil" (Hitzig), or, as from a different text, γνωσθήσεται (LXX.). Comp. the Greek proverb (Menand. 'Monost.' 274), κακοῖς ὁμιλῶν καὐτὸς ἐκβήσῃ κακός, and "Noscitur a sociis."

22 A good *man* leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the [g]wealth of the sinner *is* laid up for the just.

23 [h]Much food *is in* the tillage of the poor: but there is *that is* destroyed for want of judgment.

24 [i]He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

25 [k]The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.

CHAPTER XIV.

EVERY wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

2 He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: [a]but *he that is* perverse in his ways despiseth him.

3 In the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

4 Where no oxen *are*, the crib *is* clean: but much increase *is* by the strength of the ox.

5 [b]A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

6 A scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it* not: but [c]knowledge *is* easy unto him that understandeth.

7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.

8 The wisdom of the prudent *is* to understand his way: but the folly of fools *is* deceit.

9 [d]Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous *there is* favour.

10 The heart knoweth [†]his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

[g] ...27. 17. [h] ...ap. 12. [i] ...ap. 23. [k] ...34. & 37. 3. [a] ...b 12. 4. [b] Exod. 20. 16. & 23. 1 chap. 6. 19 & 12. 17. [c] chap. 8. 9. [d] chap. 10. 23. [†] Heb. *the bitterness of his soul.*

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22. An expression of trust, like that in Eccles. ii. 26, that in the long run the anomalies of the world are rendered even. The heaped-up treasures of the wicked find their way at last into the hands of better men.

23. The antithesis between the two clauses is less clear than usual. The contrast is the ever-recurring one between honest poverty and dishonest wealth. "The new-ploughed field of the poor is much food, but there are those, who, though rich, perish through their disregard of right."

24. *chasteneth him betimes*] More literally, **seeketh chastisement for him betimes.**

CHAP. XIV. **1.** *Every wise woman*] Lit. **Wise women.** The fullest recognition that has as yet met us of the importance of woman, for good or evil, in all human society.

3. *a rod of pride*] *i.e.* the pride shewn in his speech is as a rod with which he strikes down others and himself.

4. In its literal meaning a household proverb, "Labour has its rough, unpleasant side, yet it ends in profit." But here, as elsewhere, there may be a meaning below the surface. The life of contemplation may seem purer, "cleaner" than that of action. The outer business of the world brings its cares and disturbances, but also "much increase." There will be a sure reward of that activity in good works for him who goes, as with "the strength of the ox," to the task to which God calls him.

6. Lit. **seeketh wisdom, and there is none.** Not all seeking is followed by finding. The successful pursuit of wisdom presupposes at least earnestness and reverence. The scoffer shuts himself out from the capacity of recognizing truth.

7. A direct precept breaks into the ranks of the general statements of the context. "Judge of the man by his talk. If the lips betray the mind and temper of the fool, or scoffer, go from his presence. Thou canst do no good. Thou mayest come to much evil." Another rendering is perhaps more literal: "Go from the presence of a foolish man, *and* thou hast not perceived in him the lips of knowledge;" the closer thine acquaintance, the more wilt thou look in vain for anything but folly. So Bertheau.

8. The Hebrew counterpart to the Greek "Know thyself." "The highest wisdom is for a man to understand his own way. The extremest folly is *self*-deceit." Some, however, take the last word "deceit," of fraud practised upon others. The folly, not the wisdom, of fools shews itself in their ceaseless effort to deceive.

9. The received meaning is probably the true one, but the verse is not without difficulty. See Note below.

10. Within the range of human experience there is perhaps no expression of the ultimate solitude of each man's soul at all times, and not merely (as in Pascal's 'Je mourrai seul') at the hour of death, so

11 The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

12 [e]There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

[e] chap. 16. 25.

13 Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth *is* heaviness.

14 The backslider in heart shall be [f]filled with his own ways: and a good man *shall be satisfied* from himself.

[f] chap. 1. 31.

15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

16 A wise *man* feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

17 *He that is* soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

18 The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

19 The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

20 [g]The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but [†]the rich *hath* many friends.

[g] chap. 19. 7. [†] Heb. *many are the lovers of the rich.*

21 He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: [h]but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.

[h] Ps. 112. 9.

22 Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth *shall be* to them that devise good.

23 In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.

24 The crown of the wise *is* their riches: *but* the foolishness of fools *is* folly.

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striking in its truth and depth as this. Something there is in every sorrow, and in every joy, which no one else can share. Beyond that range it is well to remember that there is a Divine Sympathy, uniting perfect knowledge and perfect love.

11. Partly repeated in xvi. 25, and partly repeating xii. 15. The way that seems right in a man's own eyes is the way of the fool, the way of self-indulgence and self-will.

13. Another wide generalization of experience:

"Medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid."

Sorrow of some kind either mingles itself with outward joy, or follows hard upon it. The laughter dies out like the crackling of the burning thorns, used in the East, in the absence of better fuel, when fire was wanted only for a temporary purpose.

14. It would be better, as there is no verb in the second clause in the original, to repeat that of the first, or to leave it to be supplied, "He who falls away from God in his heart, shall be filled with his own ways, and the good man with that which belongs to him."

15. *simple*] In the bad sense, as in i. 22.

17. The contrast lies between two forms of evil, not between evil and good. Hasty anger acts foolishly, but there is something worse. The "man of wicked devices," vindictive and insidious, incurs all men's hatred.

18. The point of the proverb lies in the word "crowned." The teacher anticipates the truth, and the paradox, of the Stoic saying, "The wise is the only king." By some commentators the clause is rendered "Gather wisdom round them."

20. Few maxims in the book jar so upon our feelings as this, and yet it does but represent the generalization of a wide experience. We seem to hear what worldly moralizers have repeated in a hundred forms. Every language, every age, might supply its parallel adages:

"Donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos,"
Ovid, 'Tristia,' I. ix. 5

(comp. Ecclus. vi. 12, xii. 8; Theogn. 621, 697), reads the same lesson; but then the words which follow shew that it is not to be taken by itself. It is the foil which sets off the brightness of the gem, the wisdom of the world contrasted with the nobler wisdom of a self-forgetting love.

21. In spite of all the selfish morality of mere prudence, the hearer is warned that to despise his neighbour (the word must be taken by us in all the width given to it by the parable of the Good Samaritan) is to sin. The fulness of blessing comes on him who sees in the poor the objects of his mercy.

22. *err*] In the sense of wandering from the right way, the way of life.

23. The ever-recurring contrast between a single hearty, thorough deed, and the mere emptiness of speech.

24. The meaning of the first clause has been often misunderstood. It has been thought to teach that riches are a crown and glory to the wise who know how to use them, not

[i ver. 5.] 25 [i]A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful *witness* speaketh lies.

26 In the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

[k chap. 13. 14.] 27 [k]The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

28 In the multitude of people *is* the king's honour: but in the want of people *is* the destruction of the prince.

29 *He that is* slow to wrath *is* of great understanding: but *he that is* [†]hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

[† Heb. *short of spirit.*]

30 A sound heart *is* the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

31 [l]He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

[l chap. 17. 5. Matth. 25. 40.]

32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.

33 Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but *that which is* in the midst of fools is made known.

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to the fool. But this is to tie down the word to its poorest and most literal meaning. What is said is that "the crown, sc. the glory, of the wise man constitutes his wealth." He alone is truly rich even as he alone (according to the old paradox of the Stoics quoted above, *v.* 18) is truly king.

The seeming tautology of the second clause is really its point. "The foolishness of fools is . . . . . ", we expect something else, but the subject is also the predicate. "The foolishness of fools is foolishness." That is the long and short of it. Turn it as you will, it comes to that at last.

25. Here, again, there is something like tautology in the second clause. We expect "destroyeth life" as the antithesis to "delivereth souls." But in this case also there is an emphasis in the seeming absence of it. "A deceitful witness speaketh lies." What worse could be said of him? All destruction is implied in falsehood.

26. *his children*] The pronoun may be referred either (1) to "the Lord," the children in that case being those whom He adopts, and who are true to their adoption; or else (2) to the worshipper, the man who fears the Lord, implied in the previous clause. The former construction is preferable.

27. Identical in its predicate with xiii. 14, where the subject is not "the fear of the Lord," but "the law of the wise."

fountain of life] See note on x. 11.

28. The occurrence of this political precept in the midst of the maxims of personal morality is striking. Still more so is its protest against the false ideal of national greatness to which Eastern kings, for the most part, have bowed down. Not conquest, or pomp, or gorgeous array, but a happy and numerous people, forms the true glory of a king. The word translated "prince" is of doubtful meaning; and in Ps. cvi. 15; Isai. x. 16; Micah vi. 10 (*marg.*), is rendered "leanness." Rosenmüller gives it that sense here, and renders the latter clause "in the want of people is the dread of leanness." The LXX., Vulg. and most commentators, however, support the A.V.

29. *exalteth folly*] Lifts it up, as it were, on high, and exposes it to the gaze of all men.

30. The "sound heart" (lit. heart of health) is that in which all emotions and appetites are in a healthy equilibrium. The contrast with this is the envy which eats, like a consuming disease, into the very bones and marrow of a man's moral life.

31. The antithesis of the two clauses is better seen by rendering the second **he that hath mercy on the poor honoureth Him**, sc. God who is the Maker of poor and rich alike.

32. The contrast between the righteous and the wicked is carried on beyond the limits of man's earthly life. The hope which abides even "in death" must, like that of the Psalmist (Ps. xvii. 15), look beyond it.

33. Omitting the words in italics as not in the Hebrew, "wisdom" must be taken as the subject of both clauses. The nature of the contrast has been very differently understood: (1) Wisdom has her home in the heart of him that hath understanding, but is "made known," sc. by the very force of contrast, in the midst of fools; or (2) "is made known," sc. is reserved and reticent in the one, noisy and boastful in the other; or (3) the LXX. and some other versions get over the difficulty by inserting a negative in the second clause, "Wisdom is not made known." (4) The Targum cuts the knot by inserting a new subject in the second clause, "Folly is made known." (5) The Vulg. takes the verb as active, and gives "indoctos quosque erudiet." Of these (1) seems to have most to commend it.

34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach †to any people.

† Heb. *to nations.*

35 The king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath is *against* him that causeth shame.

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34. *reproach*] The word so rendered (חסד) has this sense in Lev. xx. 17, and generally in the Chaldee Targums. Its more usual meaning, "mercy, piety," has been retained by some commentators (Schultens and Grotius), who attach to the word rendered "sin" the sense of "sin-offering," and so get the maxim "piety is an atonement for the people." There seems, however, no reason for abandoning the A.V.

NOTE on CHAP. XIV. 9.

"Fools make a mock at sin." The verb in the Heb. is singular, the noun plural. We have therefore either to assume, with the A.V., the Vulg., Rosenmüller, Ewald and others, that the number is altered to individualize the application of the maxim, or, with Bertheau, to make אָשָׁם the subject of the verb. In this case too we have to choose between (*a*) the common meaning of the word, "Sin mocks the fools who are its victims"—sc. disappoints and ruins them, or, (*b*) that which it has in Lev. v. 6, 7; 1 S. vi. 4, of a "sin-offering," which gives as the meaning, "A sin-offering does but mock the worshippers when they are wilfully wicked." They expect to gain God's favour, and do not gain it (Bertheau). So taken it becomes parallel to xv. 8, xxi. 7.

CHAPTER XV.

A [a]SOFT answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

2 The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: [b]but the mouth of fools †poureth out foolishness.

3 [c]The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

4 †A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life: but perverseness therein *is* a breach in the spirit.

5 [d]A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

6 In the house of the righteous *is* much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish *doeth* not so.

8 [e]The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

9 The way of the wicked *is* an abomination unto the LORD: but he

[a] chap. 25. 15.
[b] chap. 12. 23. & 13. 16. ver. 28.
† Heb. *belcheth, or, bubbleth.*
[c] Job 34. 21. chap. 5. 21. Jer. 16. 17. & 32. 19. Hebr. 4. 13.
† Heb. *The healing of the tongue.*
[d] chap. 10. 1.
[e] chap. 21. 27. Isai. 1. 11. & 66. 3. Jer. 6. 20. & 7. 22. Amos 5. 22.

CHAP. XV. 2. *useth knowledge aright*] Rather, **makes knowledge goodly.** What is meant to be set forth is the contrast between the power of well-considered speech to commend true wisdom, and the pouring, literally, as in marg., "the bubbling forth" of folly.

3. The teaching which began with the fear of the Lord would not be complete without this assertion of His omnipresent knowledge.

4. *wholesome*] The same word as that rendered "sound" in xiv. 30. Here also both meanings fit in, that of "tranquil" or "placable" being somewhat the best. A more literal and perhaps preferable rendering would be **soundness of speech.**

tree of life] Comp. note on iii. 18, xi. 30.

breach in the spirit] With the sense of **vexation,** as the word is rendered in Isai. lxv. 14.

7. *not so*] Unless we take this as a half-ironical softening of the censure, it forms a somewhat weak antithesis. The word translated "so" is taken by Schultens in its etymological force as "strong," "firm," and the passage stands, "the heart of the fool *disperseth* (verb supplied from the first clause) what is weak and unsteady," sc. "falsehood and unwisdom." Others again follow the LXX. in taking it as an adjective, "the heart of the fool is unstedfast." The phrase is, however, of frequent occurrence (Gen. xlviii. 18; Exod. x. 11; Num. xii. 7), and does not require this strain upon its usual meaning.

8. The teaching of the prophets, as to the conditions of acceptable sacrifice, finds its counterpart in the maxims of the wise. Comp. 1 S. xv. 22; Isai. i. 11, lxi. 8, lxvi. 3.

loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

10 [1]Correction *is* grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: *and* he that hateth reproof shall die.

[1] Or, *Instruction.*

11 [f]Hell and destruction *are* before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

[f] Job 26. 6.

12 A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.

13 [g]A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

[g] chap. 17. 22.

14 The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

15 All the days of the afflicted *are* evil: but he that is of a merry heart *hath* a continual feast.

16 [h]Better *is* little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

[h] Ps. 37. 16. chap. 16. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 6.

17 [i]Better *is* a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

[i] chap. 17. 1.

18 [k]A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but *he that is* slow to anger appeaseth strife.

[k] chap. 26. 21. & 29. 22.

19 The way of the slothful *man is* as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous [†]*is* made plain.

[†] Heb. is *raised up as a causey.*

20 [l]A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

[l] chap. 10. 1.

21 [m]Folly *is* joy to *him that is* [†]destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

[m] chap. 10. 23.

[†] Heb. *void of heart.*

22 [n]Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellers they are established.

[n] chap. 11. 14.

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10. Better, **There is a grievous correction**, sc. "nothing less than death," to him that forsaketh the way.

11. Again an echo from Job, xxvi. 6. The stress is laid on the darkness and gloom of the shadow-world (*Sheol*) and the abyss (*Abaddon*), the "bottomless pit" of Rev. ix. 1, 11, where the Hebrew word is given, side by side with its Greek equivalent.

13. Both clauses probably express the same truth. Emotions of joy and sorrow shew themselves in outward look and act. "In sorrow of heart the breath is oppressed." In the A.V. the parallelism is lost. All that is needed is to take the word which answers to "spirit" in the literal sense which underlies the figurative. So Hitzig. Rosenmüller and Bertheau, however, support the A.V.

15. *afflicted*] The antithesis with the words in the second clause, "he that is of a merry (lit. "good") heart," shews that the affliction meant is less that of outward circumstances than of a troubled and downcast spirit. Life to the cheerful is as one perpetual banquet, whether he be poor or rich. That which disturbs the feast is anxiety, the "taking thought" of Matt. vi. 34.

16. Here also we trace the harmony of wisdom, *i.e.* of the Divine Word, speaking through many different channels and in different tones. The proverb has its completion in the teaching which bids us seek first "the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. vi. 33), and finds echoes in the maxims of the wise among other nations who have uttered like thoughts.

17. *a dinner of herbs*] The meals of the poor and the abstemious. Flesh was at all times the diet of the rich, or reserved for special occasions. The "stalled ox," like the "fatted calf" of Luke xv. 23, would indicate a stately magnificence.

19. The proverb condenses a parable. The slothful goes on his journey, and for him the path is thick set with thorns, briars, fences, through which he cannot force his way. For the "righteous" (better, **upright**), the same path is as the broad raised causeway of the king's highway. Comp. Isai. xl. 3.

20. At first sight the parallelism does not seem close, but to "despise" a mother is *ipso facto* to cause her the deepest grief, and is therefore not unfitly contrasted with "making a glad father."

21. Here also the contrast is implied rather than stated. "The empty-hearted, rejoicing in folly, goes the wrong way; the man of understanding, rejoicing in wisdom, goes the right way."

22. *counsellers*] The Hebrew word used, as it is, almost as an official title (1 Chro. xxvii. 32; Isai. i. 26, xix. 11), brings before us the picture of the divan or council-chamber of Eastern countries, arranged for a solemn conference of the wise.

23. The words have, probably, a special reference to the debates in council implied in *v.* 22. True as they are at all times,

23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word *spoken* †in due season, how good *is it!*

† Heb. *in his season.*

24 *a* The way of life *is* above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

a Phil. 3. 20. Col. 3. 1, 2.

25 *b* The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.

b chap. 12. 7. & 14. 11.

26 *c* The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD: but *the words* of the pure *are* †pleasant words.

c chap. 6. 18. † Heb. *words of pleasantness.*

27 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

28 The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

29 *d* The LORD *is* far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

d Ps. 34. 16. & 145. 18.

30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: *and* a good report maketh the bones fat.

31 The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

32 He that refuseth ‖instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that ‖heareth reproof †getteth understanding.

‖ Or, *correction.* ‖ Or, *obeyeth.* † Heb. *possesseth an heart.*

33 The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and *e* before honour *is* humility.

e chap. 18. 12.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE *a* ‖ preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the LORD.

a ver. 9. chap. 19. 21. & 20. 24. Jer. 10. 23. ‖ Or, *disposings.*

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they also bring before us the special characteristic of the East, the delight in ready, improvised answers, solving difficulties, turning aside anger. Such an answer, to a people imaginative rather than logical, has much more weight than any elaborate argument. Comp. the effect produced on the mind of the scribe who heard our Lord's dispute with the Sadducees, when he saw that He had "answered well." Mark xii. 28.

24. The contrast lies in the words "above," "beneath." The one path is all along upward, leading to the highest life. It rescues him from the other, which is all along downward, ending in the gloom of Sheol.

25. *the widow*] Here, as elsewhere (Deut. x. 18; Ps. lxviii. 5), the widow, as the extremest type of desolation, stands as the representative of the whole class contrasted with the proud. They are safer in their poverty in the protection of the Lord than the proud are in the haughtiness of their strength.

26. It would be better to omit the words in italics and to invert the order of the second clause, **words of pleasantness are pure,** sc. the gracious words that seek to please, not wound, are to Him as a pure acceptable offering, the similitude being taken from the Levitical ritual, and the word "pure" used in a half ceremonial sense as in Mal. i. 11.

27. The mention of "gifts" shews that there is a special application to the office of the judge. It is worth while to note that the Chaldee Targum, in its paraphrase of this passage, gives the words "he who gathers the mammon of unrighteousness," using the words with special reference to wealth obtained by unjust judgments. May we infer that the more memorable adoption of that phrase (Luke xvi. 9) had a point of contact, through the version then popularly used in the synagogues of Palestine, with this proverb?

28. The emphasis lies on the contrast between the "studying" of the wise before he answers and the hasty "bubbling" or babbling of the foolish. The teaching of our Lord (Matt. x. 19) presents us with a different and higher precept, resting upon different conditions. Within the limits of human wisdom and experience the "studying" is right.

29. We may perhaps trace a reference to this maxim, a proof how deeply it had taken root in men's hearts, in the reasoning of the blind man in John ix. 31.

30. *light of the eyes*] Probably not the outward light which the eyes look on, but the brightness which shines in the eyes of one whose heart and face are alike full of joy. Such a look by itself acts with a healing and quickening power. Comp. the phrase "the light of the king's countenance" in xvi. 15.

a good report] sc. good news.

31. *the reproof of life*] The construction admits of two senses, (1) the reproof that leads to, or gives life, (2) that which comes from life and its experience. Of these (1) is preferable.

32. *understanding*] Lit. "heart," the symbol of a moral rather than merely intellectual wisdom. "Getteth" as in the text is better than the marg. "possesseth."

33. *the instruction of wisdom*] The latter word stands as the genitive of the object.

2 [b]All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

3 [c]†Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

4 The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: [d]yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 [e]Every one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be †unpunished.

6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.

7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

8 [f]Better *is* a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

9 [g]A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

10 †A divine sentence *is* in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.

11 [h]A just weight and balance *are* the LORD's: †all the weights of the bag *are* his work.

12 *It is* an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

13 Righteous lips *are* the delight

[b] ...21. 2
[c] ...37. 5 ...22. ...ch. 6.
...e 12.
[d] ...t. 5. 7 ...b.
...b 21.
[e] ...p. 6. ...8. 13.
† ...b. ...in-...nt.
[f] Ps. 37. 16. chap. 15. 16.
[g] ver. 1.
† Heb. *Divination.*
[h] Lev. 19. 36. chap. 11. 1
† Heb. *all the stones*

The fear of the Lord is the discipline that leads to wisdom.

CHAP. XVI. The proverbs with which this chapter opens (*vv.* 1—7) have, more than any other group, a specially religious character impressed on them. The name of Jehovah as Giver, Guide, Ruler, or Judge, meets us in each of them.

1. Better, **The plans of the heart belong to man, but the utterance of the tongue is from Jehovah.** Here also, as in the events of life, "man proposes, God disposes." Thoughts come and go, as it were, spontaneously, but true, well-ordered speech is the gift of God. The same truth appears in another form in *v.* 9.

2. All moralists have recognized the truth of the first clause. We are blind to our own faults, do not see ourselves as others see us. Here, however, there is the true remedy against self-deceit. There is One who tries not the "ways" only, but the "spirits," a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

3. *Commit*] Lit. "Roll," as a man transfers a burden from his own back to one stronger and better able to bear it. Comp. Ps. xxii. 8, xxxvii. 5.

thy thoughts] sc. the plans or counsels out of which the works spring.

4. *for himself*] Better, **The Lord hath wrought everything for its own end;** sc. "hath ordered all things well," and this includes the appointment of an "evil day" for "the wicked" who deserve it. The A.V., "for himself," is not justified by the Hebrew, and suggests an untrue view of the divine government.

5. As regards the last clause, see note on xi. 21.

6. Another precept, like that of xv. 8, asserting the moral as contrasted with the ritual element of religion. "By mercy and truth," not by sacrifices and burnt-offerings, "iniquity is purged, atoned for, expiated." The verb is the same as that which enters into the prominent Hebrew words for "propitiation" and "atonement." The teaching is the same as that of the prophets. (1 S. xv. 22; Micah vi. 6—8, and Pss. l. 13, 14, li. 16, 17.)

7. Not that the enemies are simply kept quiet through their knowledge that the good man is under God's protection, but that goodness has power to charm and win them to itself.

9. *deviseth his way*] sc. thinks it out with anxious care, and yet it is the Lord and He only Who directs the steps. Comp. *v.* 1.

10. *A divine sentence*] The word (קסם) is elsewhere used for "divination," "soothsaying," in its darker aspect as contrasted with prophecy. Bearing this in mind we get at the true meaning. The true oracle is to be sought, not from soothsayers and diviners, but "at the lips of the king," who is ideally the representative, the προφήτης, of Jehovah, in His government of mankind.

11. In substance identical with xi. 1, but with some difference of statement. Men are not to think that trade lies outside the divine law. He has commanded all that belongs to truth and right there also. (Lev. xix. 35, 36; Deut. xxv. 13.)

the weights of the bag] Lit. "the stones." See note on xi. 1.

12. Again a picture of the ideal king; finding, like the preceding verse, an echo in the teaching of a prophet. (Isai. xvi. 5.)

of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

14 The wrath of a king *is as* messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.

15 In the light of the king's countenance *is* life; and [i]his favour *is* as a cloud of the latter rain.

16 [k]How much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

17 The highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

18 [l]Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

19 Better *it is to be* of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20 [1]He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso [m]trusteth in the LORD, happy *is* he.

21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

22 [n]Understanding *is* a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools *is* folly.

23 The heart of the wise [†]teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

24 Pleasant words *are as* an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

25 [o]There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

26 [†]He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth [†]craveth it of him.

27 [†]An ungodly man diggeth up

[i] chap. 19. 12.
[k] chap. 8. 11.
[l] chap. 11. 2. & 18. 12.
[1] Or, *He that understandeth a matter.*
[m] Ps. 2. 12. & 34. 8. & 125. 1. Isai. 30. 18. Jer. 17. 7.
[n] chap. 13. 14.
[†] Heb. *maketh wise.*
[o] chap. 14. 12.
[†] Heb. *The soul of him that laboureth.*
[†] Heb. *boweth unto him.*
[†] Heb. *A man of Belial.*

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14. While the words are still spoken of the king as being all that he ought to be, they remind us almost painfully of the terrible rapidity with which, in the despotic monarchies of the East, punishment, even death, follows on displeasure.

15. *a cloud of the latter rain*] Here, as elsewhere, the latter rain is that which falls in March or April just before the harvest. (Deut. xi. 14; Jer. iii. 3, v. 24; James v. 7.) The "cloud" which brings it, at once screening men from the scorching sun, and bringing plenty and blessing, is a fit type of the highest favour.

19. *divide the spoil*] Here, as in Isai. liii. 12, the act that commonly followed on victory is taken as a synonym for victory itself.

20. The parallelism here has something of the nature of a climax. Good as it is to "handle a matter wisely," it is far better to "trust in the Lord." The former is really impossible except through the latter. Another rendering gives "He who gives heed to the word," sc. the commandment of the Lord.

21. The words point to the conditions of all true growth in wisdom. Moral wisdom ("the wise in heart") is recognized as intellectual also. He who has the gift of uttering it in winning speech increases it in himself and others.

22. *wellspring of life*] The same word as the "fountain of life" in xiv. 27. Comp. note on x. 11.

the instruction of fools] Not that which they give, but that which they receive. Truth is expressed by means of a paradox. "The chastisement, the discipline of fools is"...we expect to hear "destruction, shame, confusion." What we do hear (as in the parallel instance of xiv. 24) at the completion of the sentence is, "their folly." That is its own all-sufficient punishment.

24. The words seem to imply that honey took its place not only among the luxuries, but among the medicines of the Israelites. It was at once pleasant to the taste, and healing to the diseased or exhausted body. This two-fold use made it all the fitter to be an emblem, as in this passage, and Ps. xix. 10, of the true Wisdom which is also true obedience, of the "pleasant words" in which that Wisdom speaks.

26. *He that laboureth*] Literally, "The soul, or desire, of him that laboureth." And thus we get as the sense of the whole, "The desire of the labourer labours for him" (sc. helps him in his work), "for his mouth urges him on." What is meant is that hunger of some kind is the spring of all hearty labour. Without that the man would sit down and take his ease. So far, the literal meaning is plain enough, but it is probable also that this too is a "parable" and a "dark saying." Unless there is a hunger in the soul, craving to be fed, there can be no true labour after righteousness and wisdom. (Comp. Matt. v. 6.)

27. Once again the "man of Belial" meets us. The four verses (*vv.* 27—30) all hang together as speaking of the same thing, and the well-known opprobrious name stands

evil: and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire.

28 [f] A froward man [†] soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.

[f] chap. 6. 14, 19. & 15. 18. & 26. 21. & 29. 22. † Heb. *sendeth forth.*

29 A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way *that is* not good.

30 He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

31 The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of righteousness.

32 *He that is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.

CHAPTER XVII.

BETTER *is* [a] a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of [1] sacrifices *with* strife.

[a] chap. 15. 17. [1] Or, *good cheer.*

2 A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

3 [b] The fining pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

[b] Ps. 26. 2 chap. 27. 21. Jer. 17. 10 Mal. 3. 3.

4 A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; *and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

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at the head as stigmatizing the man who delights in causing the mischief of which they treat.

diggeth up evil] sc. digs an evil pit for others to fall into. Comp. Ps. vii. 15.

30. As in vi. 13, we have the physiognomy of the slanderer, the man of Belial, brought before us,—the half-closed eyes that never look you straight in the face, the restlessness or cunning of which biting the lips is the surest indication.

31. The insertion of the "if" of the A.V. (to which there is no corresponding particle in the original) gives to a broad, general maxim the tameness of one stated with limitations and conditions. Literally the proverb runs, "The hoary head is a crown of glory: it is found in the way of righteousness," comes as its reward.

32. In these words we have the first recorded utterance of what has since become a truism, repeated in different languages in all but identical terms. Comp. Ovid, 'Epist. ex Pont.' II. v. 75, "Fortior est qui se, quam qui fortissima vincit Moenia."

33. *into the lap*] The process seems to have been that the lots were thrown into the gathered folds of a robe, and then drawn out.

disposing] Better, the **judgment** or sentence which depends upon the lot. Where all human influence was excluded, where everything seemed the merest chance, there the faith of the Israelite teacher recognized the guidance of a higher Will. So in the case of Achan (Josh. vii. 18), and Jonathan (1 S. xiv. 37—42), it had been used to detect guilt. The same process, it would seem from this passage, was employed ordinarily in trials where the judges could not decide on the facts before them. Comp. xviii. 18.

CHAP. XVII. **1.** *sacrifices*] As in vii. 14, the feast accompanied the offering. Part of the victims were burnt upon the altar, the rest was consumed by the worshipper and his friends. The "house full of sacrifices" was therefore one abounding in sumptuous feasts.

2. The "servant," it must be remembered, was a slave, but in the absence of children, as in the case of Eliezer of Damascus (Gen. xv. 2), or by the misconduct, real or supposed, of the true heir, as in the case of Ziba (2 S. xvi. 4), he might succeed to the inheritance. The latter instance indeed, even before the transfer by David of Mephibosheth's rights, is a striking example of the wealth and influence which a man, starting from the position of a slave, might by prudence and tact attain to (2 S. ix. 10).

3. The art of smelting ore, which must have been known to the Israelites from the time of their sojourning in Egypt, but had, probably, been brought into fresh prominence through intercourse with the Phœnicians and with Sheba, here becomes a parable. Wonderful as is the separation of the pure metal from the dross with which it has mingled, there is something yet more wonderful in the divine discipline which purifies the good that lies hid, like a grain of gold, even in rough and common natures, and frees it from all admixture of evil. The same similitude meets us again in Mal. iii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 7.

4. The two clauses, though closely resembling each other, describe two phases of

[c] chap. 14. 31.

5 [c]Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: *and* he that is glad at calamities shall not be †unpunished.

† Heb. *held innocent.*

[d] Ps. 127. 3. & 128. 3.

6 [d]Children's children *are* the crown of old men; and the glory of children *are* their fathers.

† Heb. *A lip of excellency.*

7 †Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do †lying lips a prince.

† Heb. *a lip of lying.*

[e] chap. 18. 16.

8 [e]A gift *is as* a †precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

† Heb. *stone of grace.*

[f] chap. 10. 12.

9 [f]He that covereth a transgression ‖seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

‖ Or, *procureth.*

10 ‖A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.

‖ Or, *A reproof aweth more a wise man, than to strike a fool an hundred times.*

11 An evil *man* seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

12 Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.

13 Whoso [g]rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

[g] Rom. 12. 17. 1 Thess. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9.

14 The beginning of strife *is as*

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the mutual affinities of evil. The evil doer delights in lies, the liar in bad words. In the Hebrew, however, both words are abstracts, "wickedness," "lying."

5. *he that is glad at calamities*] The temper is common at all times as the most hateful form of evil, but most languages have had to describe it by its effects. It belonged to the Greek mind in its fertility of combination to express it by the single word ἐπιχαιρεκακία (Arist. 'Eth. Nicom.' II. 6), well rendered by the German "Schadenfreude." It is noteworthy that the sins spoken of in both clauses occur also in Job's vindication of his integrity (xxxi. 13, 29). The marg. "shall not be held innocent" gives an admissible, but not preferable, rendering.

6. The special point dwelt on is the reciprocity of good in sustained family relationships. A long line of children's children is the glory of old age, a long line of ancestors the glory of their descendants.

7. The marg., "lip of excellency," "lip of lying," is more literal and gives greater emphasis to the contrast.

prince] Better perhaps "noble," princely-hearted (so LXX.). What is pointed out is not the unfitness of lying lips for exalted rank, but the necessity of harmony, in each case, between character and speech.

8. A half-satirical description of the power of bribery in palaces and among judges. The precious stone, literally "a stone of grace," is probably a gem, thought of as a talisman having the power to conciliate favour. The words "in the eyes of him that hath it" (literally, "of its possessor"), may refer either to the man who gives, or to him who receives the bribe, and the judgments of interpreters are nearly equally divided. On the whole, however, it seems best to refer it to the man who, being the possessor, has the power to give it. He sees in the gift a talisman which "wherever it turns" will ensure "prosperity." We may compare the line in Ovid, 'de Art. Am.' III. 653,

"Munera, crede mihi, capiunt hominesque deosque."

Or Pindar's

χρυσὸς ἐν χερσὶ φανείς, κ.τ.λ.
'Pyth.' III. 55.

9. *seeketh love*] *i.e.* takes the course which leads to his gaining it.

he that repeateth a matter] The warning is directed not against the tendency to take up idle scandal about one's friends and spread it, but against that which leads a man to dwell with irritating iteration on a past offence instead of burying it in oblivion.

separateth very friends] Better, **alienateth his chief friend**. The thought is not so much that of the mischief which the talebearer makes between others, as of the injury which he works for himself.

10. *entereth*] The marg. "aweth," which implies a different etymology for the Hebrew verb, though supported by some Jewish interpreters, is inaccurate and less expressive.

11. "Rebellion seeks only evil," is a possible alternative. In either case the proverb retains its force as expressing the reverence of the East for the supreme authority of the king. The "cruel messenger" may mean the angel of death who is sent forth against the rebel, but is more probably the king's officer despatched to subdue and punish him. The LXX. however adopts the former meaning, and gives "The Lord will send a pitiless angel."

12. The large brown bear of Syria, in her rage at the loss of her whelps, was to the Israelites the strongest type of brute ferocity. Comp. 2 S. xvii. 8; 2 K. ii. 24; Hos. xiii. 8.

14. The figure is taken not from the springing forth of a stream, but from the great tank or reservoir upon which Eastern cities often depended for their supply of water. The beginning of strife is compared to the

when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

15 [h] He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* abomination to the LORD.

[h] Exod. 23. 7. chap. 24. 24. Isai. 5. 23.

16 Wherefore *is there* a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing *he hath* no heart *to it?*

17 [i] A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

[i] chap. 18. 24.

18 [k] A man void of † understanding striketh hands, *and* becometh surety in the presence of his friend.

[k] chap. 6. 1. & 11. 15. † Heb. *heart.*

19 He loveth transgression that loveth strife: *and* he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.

20 † He that hath a froward heart findeth no good: and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.

† Heb. *The froward of heart.*

21 [l] He that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.

[l] chap. 10. 1.

22 [m] A merry heart doeth good ‖ *like* a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

[m] chap. 12. 25. & 15. 13. ‖ Or, *to a medicine.*

23 A wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

24 [n] Wisdom *is* before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool *are* in the ends of the earth.

[n] Eccles. 2. 14. & 8. 1.

25 [o] A foolish son *is* a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

[o] chap. 10. 1. & 15. 20. & 19. 13.

26 Also to punish the just *is* not good, *nor* to strike princes for equity.

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first crack in the wall or mound of such a reservoir. At first a few drops ooze out, but after a time the whole mass of waters pour themselves with fury, and it is hard to set limits to the destruction which they cause.

before it be meddled with] Literally, "before it rolls, or rushes forward."

15. Men need to be warned against an unjust acquittal, no less than against unjust condemnation, "Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur." In the Hebrew as in the English, "to justify" has its forensic sense, "to declare righteous," to acquit.

16. A more literal rendering gives greater point: **Why is there a price in the hand of a fool? Is it to get wisdom when he has no heart for it?** The fool, however willing, cannot buy wisdom. No money will avail without the understanding heart.

17. The A.V., though grammatically tenable, misses in great measure the beauty of the proverb. What is meant is not a depreciation of the ties of friendship as compared with those of kindred, but to exalt the true friend to the uttermost. It describes, as in xviii. 24, the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." **At all times a friend loveth, but in adversity he is born** (sc. **becomes**) **a brother.** The rendering of the A.V. is, however, maintained by some commentators (Bertheau), and is supported by the LXX. and Vulgate. Taken as above, we have in it a parallel to the "Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur" of Cic. 'de Amic.' c. 64.

18. The reappearance of the warning against suretiship seems to be suggested by the previous verse. As nothing is nobler than the self-sacrifice of the true friend, so nothing is more contemptible than the weakness which allows itself to be sacrificed for the sake of worthless associates.

in the presence of his friend] = "on behalf of," or "to his friend for some third person."

19. *he that exalteth his gate*] To exalt the gate is to build a stately house, *i.e.* to indulge in arrogant ostentation.

22. *doeth good like a medicine*] Better, **worketh a good healing.** There is no particle of comparison in the Hebrew.

23. Another protest against the pervading corruption of Oriental judges. The words "from the bosom," from the fold of the garment rather than from the bag or girdle in which money was usually carried, possibly point to the stealthiness with which the gift is offered.

24. *before him*] Set straight before his eyes as the mark to "which they look." Others, following the LXX. and Vulg., render "Wisdom is in the face of him that hath understanding," sc. is seen in the clear, stedfast look of the wise man as contrasted with the wandering gaze of the fool. The former meaning is, however, preferable.

25. A repetition of *v.* 21 with the addition of a reference to the sorrow which the folly of a child brings specially to the mother.

26. *nor to strike princes for equity*] Better, **and to strike one noble** (character rather than rank is spoken of, as in *v.* 7, viii. 16; and Job xii. 21) **is beyond,** sc. **against right.** Comp. our Lord's remonstrance, "If well, why smitest thou me?" (John xviii. 23.)

p James 1. 19.

27 p He that hath knowledge spareth his words: *and* a man of understanding is of [1]an excellent spirit.

[1] Or, *a cool spirit.*

q Job 13. 5.

28 q Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: *and* he that shutteth his lips *is esteemed* a man of understanding.

CHAPTER XVIII.

[1] Or, *He that separateth himself seeketh according to his desire,* and *intermeddleth in every business.*

[1]THROUGH desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh *and* intermeddleth with all wisdom.

2 A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.

3 When the wicked cometh, *then* cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

4 a The words of a man's mouth *are as* deep waters, *and* the wellspring of wisdom *as* a flowing brook.

5 b *It is* not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

6 A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

7 c A fool's mouth *is* his destruction, and his lips *are* the snare of his soul.

8 d The words of a [1]talebearer *are* [1]as wounds, and they go down into the [†]innermost parts of the belly.

a chap. 20. 5. b Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. & 16. 19. chap. 24. 23. c chap. 10. 14. & 12. 13. & 13. 3. d chap. 12. 18. & 26. 22. [1] Or, whisperer. [1] Or, like as when men are wounded. † Heb. chambers.

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27. The marginal reading "a cool spirit," sc. "self-possessed," "calm," rests upon the K'tib of the Hebrew; "excellent" upon the K'ri. In either case it is better to invert the order of the subject and predicate. **A man of calm (or noble) spirit is a man of understanding.**

28. A better meaning is perhaps obtained by supplying "is" instead of "is esteemed" in the latter clause. As the verse stands in the A.V. the same thought is repeated with hardly any change. With this change we get the maxim that silence is in any case good. The fool gains the repute of wisdom by it. The man who is naturally reticent is, or is in the way to become, a man of understanding.

CHAP. XVIII. **1.** The text and the marginal reading of the A.V. indicate, though not very clearly, the two chief constructions of this somewhat difficult verse.

"He that separateth himself seeketh according to his desire, and intermeddleth in every business." Other renderings are

(1) **He who separateth himself from others seeks his own desire, and rushes forward against all wise counsel.** So taken, the precept is, as we should say, a warning against self-will and the self-assertion which exults in differing from the received customs and opinions of mankind. So Rosenmüller and Bertheau.

(2) He who separates himself (sc. from the foolish, unlearned multitude) seeks his own desire (sc. that which is worthy to be desired), and mingleth himself with all wisdom. So Aben-Ezra and the Jewish commentators generally.

(3) The LXX. and Vulg. seem to have followed a different text, and render "A man who seeks occasions, wishing to separate himself from a friend, shall be always open to reproach."

If we have to decide between the two interpretations, one blaming and the other commending the life of isolation, the answer must be that the former is most in harmony with the broad, genial temper of the book of Proverbs; but it is not strange that Pharisaism, in its very name, separating and self-exalting, should have adopted the latter.

2. One form of egotism had been condemned in the preceding verse. This deals with another, equally characteristic of the "fool." In "understanding," sc. self-knowledge, he finds no pleasure; but self-assertion, talking about himself and his own opinions, is his highest joy.

3. *ignominy*] As standing parallel to "the wicked" of the first clause, the meaning would be better expressed by "together with baseness comes reproach." The outer shame follows close upon the inner.

4. Is the parallelism of the two clauses one of identity or contrast? In the former case we must interpret the first clause by the second, and take the "man's mouth" as meaning "the mouth of the man who is worthy of the name, wise and good." On the other hand, it must be remembered that "deep waters" are associated in the Old Testament with the thought of darkness and mystery (xx. 5; Ps. lxix. 2; Eccles. vii. 24); and we get a more profound thought if we see in the proverb a comparison between all teaching from without and that of the light within. The words of a man's mouth are dark as the "deep waters" of a pool, or tank, but the well-spring of wisdom is as a flowing brook, bright and clear. So taken, the verse presents a contrast like that of Jer. ii. 13.

6—8. The three verses go together, the first speaking of the immediate, the others of the remote, results of the "fool's" temper. First

9 He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

10 [e]The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and †is safe.

[e] Ps. 18. 2. & 27. 1. & 144. 2.
† Heb. *is set aloft.*

11 [f]The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

[f] chap. 10. 15.

12 [g]Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour *is* humility.

[g] chap. 11. 2. & 15. 33. & 16. 18.

13 He that †answereth a matter before he heareth *it*, it *is* folly and shame unto him.

† Heb. *returneth a word.*

14 The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

15 The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

16 [h]A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

[h] chap. 17. 8.

17 *He that is* first in his own cause *seemeth* just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

18 The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.

19 A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city: and *their* contentions *are* like the bars of a castle.

20 [i]A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

[i] chap. 12. 14. & 13. 2.

"contention," then "blows," then "destruction," and last, "wounds."

8. *wounds*] The word so rendered occurs here and in xxvi. 22 only, and its meaning is therefore somewhat doubtful. The A.V. margin gives "like as when men are wounded." Other renderings are (1) "as dainties," (2) "as whispers," (3) "as soft breezes." Of these (1) gives, it is believed, the best sense. So taken, the verse describes the avidity with which men swallow in tales of scandal. They find their way to the innermost recesses of man's nature.

10. *safe*] Lit., as in the marg., "set aloft," exalted. Comp. Ps. xviii. 2, 33.

11. The complement of the preceding verse. What the Name of the Lord is to the righteous, that wealth is to the rich. He flees to it for refuge as to a strong city; but it is so "in his own conceit" only. The word so rendered signifies primarily an "image," and so "imagination."

high wall] The adjective in the Hebrew is the same as that rendered "safe" in *v.* 10, and is manifestly used in reference to it.

12. *before honour*] Here, as in the first clause, "before" points to priority of time, not of value or preference.

13. *answereth a matter*] Better than the marg. "returneth a word."

14. *infirmity*] sc. bodily pain or trouble. It may be noted that "spirit" in the Heb. is masculine in the first clause, feminine in the second, as though in the latter it was looked on as having lost its strength.

15. At first sight there seems a certain flatness in the apparent sameness of the two clauses. It is, however, apparent only. What is said is that with the wise and prudent there is no loss of time. "Heart" and "ear" —the mind working within, or gathering from without materials for its thought—are, through this channel or that, ever gaining knowledge.

16. The "gift" here, as elsewhere, is the "bribe," which secures favour. Here, by a bold personification, it appears as the powerful "friend at court," who introduces another, and makes him welcome in high places. Comp. note on xvii. 23.

17. As the preceding verse has given a warning against one fault in judging, so this protests against another. Haste is hardly less evil than corruption. "Audi alteram partem" should be the rule of every judge.

his neighbour] sc. the other party to the suit.

searcheth] sc. scrutinizes and detects him.

18. As in xvi. 33, the practice of casting lots as a tacit appeal to the Divine Judge appears as giving a fairer prospect of a just decision than the corruption referred to in *v.* 16, or the hasty onesidedness in *v.* 17.

19. The exact meaning and construction of the first clause have been matter of dispute. The A.V. gets a meaning by the insertion of the words in italics, and has the support of some commentators, as Rosenmüller and Umbreit, who give, however, "deserted" or "betrayed" instead of "offended." Others take it, "A brother is more obstinate than a strong city" (so Bertheau and Ewald); but this too requires us to insert, or at least understand, an offended brother. On the whole the balance inclines in favour of the A.V. The LXX. and Vulg. give an entirely different rendering, based, apparently, upon a different text.

20. The general sense is plain. A man

21 Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

22 [k] *Whoso* findeth a wife findeth a good *thing*, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

23 The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth [l] roughly.

24 A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: [m] and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

[k] chap. 19. 14. [l] James 2. 3. [m] chap. 17. 17.

must for good or evil take the consequence of his words, as well as his deeds. There is however a certain playfulness of paradox in the form of statement. The man's belly is to be filled, not, as is usual, by what he puts into his mouth, but by what comes out of it. Comp. xii. 14.

22. The sense seems to require, "Whoso findeth a good wife," and the missing adjective, implied in the LXX., Vulg., and other versions, has been actually found in some Chaldee MSS. On the other hand, such a reading has the nature of a gloss, and it would be true to the character of the Proverb-writer to look at marriage in its ideal aspect, and see in every such union the hands of God joining together man and woman for their mutual good. The LXX. adds two maxims as a corollary, "He who casts out a good wife, casts away that which is good: but he that keepeth an adulteress is foolish and ungodly."

23. The fact, common enough in itself, is described with a quaint satire. Here again there is a paradox. The poor man, of whom one might expect roughness, supplicates; the rich, well-nurtured, from whom one might look for courtesy, answers harshly and brusquely.

24. The A.V. following the Vulg. misses the true meaning. A better rendering is, "**A man of many companions is so to his own destruction**, but there is a friend (the true, loving friend) that sticks closer than a brother." (See Note below). The teacher warns us against mistaking the counterfeit for the true treasure. It is not the multitude of so-called friends that helps us. They may only embarrass and perplex. What we prize is the one whose love is stronger and purer even than all ties of kindred.

NOTE on CHAP. XVIII. 24.

The difficulty of the verse lies in the word להתרועע. The older versions, and some modern commentators (C. B. Michaelis, Hitzig), derive it from רֵעַ, "a companion," and give a meaning approximating more or less closely to the A.V. The majority of recent critics connect it with רע = evil, and elicit a meaning like that given above. The latter is, probably, the right rendering, but the ambiguous word seems to have been chosen for the sake of the *paronomasia* which it brought with it.

CHAPTER XIX.

[a] BETTER *is* the poor that walketh in his integrity, than *he that is* perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

2 Also, *that* the soul *be* without knowledge, *it is* not good; and he that hasteth with *his* feet sinneth.

3 The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD.

4 [b] Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour.

5 [c] A false witness shall not be † unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall not escape.

6 Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and every man *is* a friend to † him that giveth gifts.

7 [d] All the brethren of the poor do

[a] chap. 28. 6. [b] chap. 14. 20. [c] Exod. 23. 1. Deut. 19. 16. chap. 6. 19. & 21. 28. † Heb. *held innocent*. † Heb. *a man of gifts*. [d] chap. 14. 20.

CHAP. XIX. **1.** The "perverse" man in the second clause is clearly the rich fool, as contrasted with the poor man who is upright.

2. Literally, "Also in the not knowing of the soul there is not good." Both *vv.* 1 and 2 are wanting in the LXX.

3. Here the special form of unwisdom is that which, having brought about disasters by its own perverseness, then turns round and "fretteth," *i.e.* angrily murmurs against the providence of God.

perverteth] The strict sense of the word is rather "overturn," "make to fail."

6. *prince*] Sc. the man of princely nature, who gives munificently.

intreat the favour] Lit. "stroke the face."

7. The text is obscure, and the reading

hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he pursueth *them with* words, *yet* they *are* wanting *to him*.

8 He that getteth [1]wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good.

9 [e]A false witness shall not be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall perish.

10 Delight is not seemly for a fool; much less [f]for a servant to have rule over princes.

11 [g]The [1]discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and *it is* his glory to pass over a transgression.

12 [h]The king's wrath *is* as the roaring of a lion; but his favour *is* as dew upon the grass.

13 [i]A foolish son *is* the calamity of his father: [k]and the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dropping.

14 House and riches *are* the inheritance of fathers: and [l]a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

15 Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul [m]shall suffer hunger.

16 [n]He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul; *but* he that despiseth his ways shall die.

17 [o]He that hath pity upon the

[h] chap. 16. 15. & 20. 2. & 28. 15.
[i] chap. 10. 1. & 15. 20. & 17. 21, 25.
[k] chap. 21. 9. & 27. 15
[l] chap. 18 22.
[m] chap. 10. 4. & 20. 13.
[n] Luke 11. 28.
[o] Matt. 10. 42. & 25. 40. 2 Cor. 9. 6, 7.

doubtful. The best way of rendering it seems that of following the Vulgate in taking the last clause as a separate maxim, "He who pursues words, nought are they." If we take the clause as connected with the two others, then it would mean "he pursues after words, and they are not." The fair speeches and promises of help come to nothing. A various reading in the Hebrew gives "he pursues after words, and these he shall have"—sc. these, and nothing else.

Something has, perhaps, to be said as to the teaching of this and other like maxims, and its apparent contrast to that of the Sermon on the Mount. To what purpose, it may be asked, is so much stress laid on the scorn and shame incident to a state which a higher teaching has pronounced "blessed"? Would not the effect of such maxims be to lead the young disciple to avoid poverty as the worst of evils? Have we not here the counsel of a worldly prudence rather than of divine wisdom? The answer is not far to seek. (1) Side by side with this teaching is that of *v.* 1, setting forth the honour of an upright poverty. There is an immeasurable distance between it and the cry "rem, rem, quocunque modo, rem." (2) The facts of human experience are not to be ignored, and the man who nobly chooses poverty should do it with his eyes open. (3) As there is an honourable poverty, so there is one which is altogether inglorious, caused by sloth and folly, leading to shame and ignominy, and it is well that the man who wishes to live rightly should avoid this. (4) We need not shrink from saying that the teaching of Christ is higher than that of the book of Proverbs, based upon a fuller revelation of the Divine Will, pointing to a higher end and a nobler standard of duty, transcending the common motives and common facts of life.

8. *wisdom*] The word in the original is that usually translated "heart." To gain that, in the full sense of the word, as implying the higher faculties both of reason and feeling, is identical with gaining wisdom, *i.e.* the faculty which seeks and finds rather than the treasure found.

10. Prosperity no less than adversity requires wisdom, and to the "fool" who lacks it, delight, high unrestrained enjoyment, is but a temptation and a snare. The second clause carries the thought on, as by an *a fortiori* argument, to what the despotism of Eastern monarchies often presented, the rule of some favoured slave, it might be, of alien birth, over the princes and nobles of the land. How hateful such rule commonly was, the repetition of the thought in xxx. 22 may help to shew. Comp. Claudian in 'Eutrop.' I. 183:

> "nec bellua tetrior ulla est
> Quam servi rabies in libera colla furentis."

13. *calamity*] The Hebrew word is plural (as in Pss. lvii. 1, xci. 3), and seems to express the multiplied and manifold sorrow caused by the foolish son.

continual dropping] The same phrase recurs in xxvii. 15, with the addition of "in a very rainy day." What is described is the irritating, unceasing, sound of the fall, drop after drop, of water through the chinks in the roof.

14. *and a prudent wife*] Better, **but**.

15. *casteth into a deep sleep*] Better, **causeth deep sleep to fall**.

16. *keepeth his own soul*] Sc. his life in the truest and highest sense. The first clause becomes, thus taken, the true antithesis of the second.

17. Familiar as the words are, we almost lose sight of the original greatness of the thought. We give to the poor. Have we lost our gift? No, what we gave, we have.

poor lendeth unto the LORD; and †that which he hath given will he pay him again.

†Or, *his deed.*

18 *Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare †for his crying.

*chap. 13. 24. & 23. 13. †Or, *to his destruction: or, to cause him to die.*

19 A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver *him*, yet thou must †do it again.

†Heb. *add.*

20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

21 *There are* many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

*Job 23. 13. Ps. 33. 10, 11. chap. 16. 1, 9. Isai. 46. 10.

22 The desire of a man *is* his kindness: and a poor man *is* better than a liar.

23 The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

24 *A slothful *man* hideth his hand in *his* bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

*chap. 15. 19. & 26. 13, 15.

25 *Smite a scorner, and the simple †will beware: and reprove one that hath understanding, *and* he will understand knowledge.

*chap. 21. 11. †Heb. *will be cunning.*

26 He that wasteth *his* father, *and* chaseth away *his* mother, *is* a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

27 Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge.

We have lent to One who will repay with usury. Underlying this, again, is the yet nobler truth of our Lord's teaching, Matt. xxv. 40. He identifies Himself with all sufferers. In giving to them we have done it also unto Him.

18. *while there is hope*] Sc. while he is still young, and capable of being reformed.

crying] The margin, "destruction," gives the true meaning of the word so rendered. So taken, the second clause would mean **do not set thy soul on his destruction**, and that either as counselling forbearance in the act of chastisement, or as urging that a false clemency is a real cruelty. The latter sense is preferable. The father is warned that to forbear from chastising is virtually to expose the son who needs it to a far worse penalty. The former has, however, the support of many commentators (Rosenmüller, Umbreit, Bertheau, Ewald), and may be compared with St Paul's teaching in Eph. vi. 4; Col. iii. 21.

19. The latter clause is difficult, but the sense seems to be that the connection between wrath and punishment is so invariable, that all efforts to save the passionate man from the disastrous consequences which he brings on his own head are made in vain. "If thou deliver him once, thou wilt have to do it again, and yet again."

21. The meaning goes deeper than the trite parallel of "Man proposes, God disposes." Stress is laid on the *many* purposes of man, shifting, changing, from good to better, from bad to worse, and the one unchanging righteous "counsel" of Jehovah. A simple "but" expresses this contrast better than the somewhat cumbrous "nevertheless."

22. The "desire" is the wish to do good, which is taken, in the absence of means to carry it into effect, for the act of kindness itself.

There is an apparent want of connection between the two clauses, but the "liar" is probably the rich man, who makes false excuses for not giving, and so is inferior to the poor man, whose will is taken for the deed.

23. *shall abide satisfied*] Better, **one that is satisfied hath a sure abiding-place.** The word "abide" has, most probably, here as elsewhere, its original sense of "passing the night." Even in the hour of darkness he shall be free from fear.

24. *hideth his hand in his bosom*] Better, **dippeth his hand in the dish.** So nearly all commentators. The A.V. follows the LXX. and Vulg. The word occurs in the sense of "dish" in 2 K. xxi. 13.

The scene brought before us is that of an Eastern feast. There are no knives, or forks, or spoons. Every guest has to help himself, or be helped by the host. Comp. John xiii. 26.

25. Simple as the words are, they embrace nearly the whole theory of punishment. If the man who offends is a scorner, sc. hardened beyond all hope of reformation, then punish him by way of retribution and example, and let the penalty be sharp, that even the unwary and careless may beware. If the man is still "understanding," then let the punishment take the form of discipline. Admonish, reprove, educate. A like distinction between the use of punishment as applied to remediable or hopeless evil is found in Plato. ('Gorgias,' p. 525, *b*, *c*.)

26. It is better to reverse the clauses, **A son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach, is one that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother.**

28 †An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.

29 Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.

CHAPTER XX.

WINE *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

2 [a]The fear of a king *is* as the roaring of a lion: *whoso* provoketh him to anger sinneth *against* his own soul.

3 *It is* an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.

4 [b]The sluggard will not plow by reason of the [1]cold; *therefore* shall he beg in harvest, and *have* nothing.

5 [c]Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

6 Most men will proclaim every one his own [1]goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

7 The just *man* walketh in his integrity: [d]his children *are* blessed after him.

8 A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

9 [e]Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

10 [f]†Divers weights, *and* †divers

[Margin: ...ness ...al. | ...16. 19. | ...10. | 1 Or, *winter.* | c chap. 18. 4. | 1 Or, *bounty.* | d Psal. 112. 2. | e 1 Kings 8. 46. 2 Chron. 6. 36. Job 14. 4. Ps. 51. 5. Eccles. 7. 20. 1 John 1. 8. | f Deut. 25. 13, &c. chap. 11. 1. & 16. 11. | † Heb. *A stone and a stone.* | † Heb. *an ephah and an ephah.*]

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27. The translation of the A.V. is obtained, as the italics shew, by the insertion of words not in the Hebrew. Taken literally we get the rendering, **Cease, my son, to hear instruction, that thou mayest err from the words of knowledge.** This seems, at first, obscure and perplexing, but the proverb is probably to be interpreted as having a keen-edged irony. What is the inevitable result of ceasing to hear instruction is spoken of as the end contemplated, and the "son" is counselled by his adviser to do that to which his weakness leads him, with a clear knowledge of the evil to which he is drifting. So Ewald and Bertheau. Hitzig, not satisfied with this, alters the text, and so gets for the first clause, "Cease to reject instruction." Rosenmüller gives "Cease, my son, to hear instruction which leads thee to err..."

28. *ungodly witness*] Literally, "witness of Belial," "worthless," "untruthful."

devoureth iniquity] Seizes on it eagerly, as a dainty, lives on it.

29. Again a pendant to the foregoing. The false witness may "scorn," but in so doing he takes his place in the company of those who never escape unpunished.

CHAP. XX. **1.** Wine and strong drink are personified as themselves doing what they make men do. The two words, "mocker" and "raging," may possibly describe the two forms of intoxication produced by the juice of the grape, and "strong drink," respectively. The latter, in itself a generic term, is here, probably, the "palm-wine" of Syria. Comp. note on Lev. x. 9.

2. *sinneth against his own soul*] Sc. against his own life, as in Habak. ii. 10.

3. *meddling*] The same word as in xvii. 14, xviii. 1. Literally, "rolls, or rushes forward."

4. *by reason of the cold*] The ploughing-time in Palestine is in November and December, when the wind blows commonly from the North.

shall he beg] Some commentators give the word a wider meaning, "he shall desire;" he shall look for his share in the harvest and find nothing. The verse is thus parallel to, "If a man will not work, neither let him eat." 2 Thess. iii. 10. The A.V., however, is quite tenable, and carries the misery that follows on sloth yet further.

5. The contest between reticence on the one side and pertinacity in search on the other is represented as by a parable. The well may be very deep (comp. xviii. 4), but the "man of understanding" has skill enough to draw up the water even to the last drop. Every question is, as it were, a turning of the windlass.

6. *goodness*] With the special sense of bounty, beneficence. The point of the proverb lies in the contrast between promise and performance. Perhaps also there is a slight irony in the latter clause. Men boast of their liberality, and we look in vain for the fulfilment of actual obligations.

9. A warning voice against the spirit, which, ignorant of its own guilt, is forward to condemn others. "Thou, too, hast not made thy heart clean, thou art not pure from thy sin."

10. Originally, as in xi. 1, of dishonesty in actual trade, but here perhaps, as a companion to *v.* 9, with a wider application to all inequality of judgment, to all judging one man by rules which we do not apply to ourselves or to another.

measures, both of them *are* alike abomination to the LORD.

11 Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work *be* pure, and whether *it be* right.

12 [g]The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

13 [h]Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be satisfied with bread.

14 *It is* naught, *it is* naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.

15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

16 [i]Take his garment that is surety *for* a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

17 [k][1]Bread of deceit *is* sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

18 [l]*Every* purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.

19 [m]He that goeth about *as* a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that [1]flattereth with his lips.

20 [n]Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his [1]lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

21 An inheritance *may be* gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

22 [o]Say not thou, I will recompense evil; *but* wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

23 [p]Divers weights *are* an abomi-

[g] Exod. 4. 11. Ps. 94. 9.
[h] chap. 12. 11. & 19. 15.
[i] chap. 27. 13.
[k] chap. 9. 17.
[1] Heb. *Bread of lying, or, falsehood.*
[l] chap. 15. 22.
[m] chap. 11. 13.
[1] Or, *enticeth.*
[n] Exod. 21. 17. Lev. 20. 9. Matt. 15. 4.
[1] Or, *candle.*
[o] Deut. 32. 35. chap. 17. 13 & 24. 29. Rom. 12. 17. 1 Thess. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9.
[p] ver. 10.

11. The eye of the teacher has traced the unfolding of character from the earliest germ. The graces or the faults of children are not trifles, as they are often deemed to be. "The child is father of the man;" and the earliest actions are prophecies of the future, whether it will be pure and right, or unclean and evil.

12. More is meant than meets the ear. It is not merely that we owe the gifts of sight and hearing to Jehovah, but that He, being the giver, will also call us to account for them. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?" Ps. xciv. 9.

13. *open thine eyes*] sc. be vigilant and active. That is the secret of prosperity.

14. *naught*] sc. bad, evil, worthless, as the word is used in 2 K. ii. 19.

15. Literally, "a vessel of preciousness," sc. most precious of all, "are the lips of knowledge."

16. The warning against suretiship and lust are here repeated and combined, as again in xxvii. 13. In the abrupt commencement we hear as it were the voice of the judge giving sentence in favour of the creditor, telling him to seize the goods of the surety who has been weak enough to pledge himself for those who are alien to him, instead of those of the actual debtor. The man who has made himself liable must bear the penalty. Retaining the reading of the A.V., the second clause reminds us of the history of Tamar (Gen. xxxviii. 17, 18). In a country where coin was scarce, pledges so given as the price of prostitution, and trials connected with them, were probably of common occurrence. The Hebrew text, however, gives "strangers" in the masculine plural, and is probably right, the feminine being the alternative reading of the margin. Comp. xxvii. 13.

17. "To eat gravel" was a Hebrew (Lam. iii. 16) and is an Arabic phrase for getting into trouble. Like this, in the long run, is the "bread" got by deceit, which tastes sweet at first, but ends by leaving the hunger of the soul unsatisfied. The general sense of the verse recognizes the fact that there is a pleasure in the sense of cleverness felt after a hard bargain or a successful fraud, and meets it by bidding men look on the after consequences.

18. Simple as the precept is, it has a special interest for us as having been expanded and reproduced in our Lord's teaching. (Luke xiv. 31.)

19. The introduction of the word "flattereth," or "enticeth," as in the marg., interferes with the parallelism, and involves the assertion that the man who flatters must also be a betrayer of secrets. Literally (as in xiii. 3), "the man who **opens his lips**," who has no reticence; such a man, with or without intending it, does the work of a talebearer.

20. Interesting as a connecting link between Lev. xx. 9 and Matt. xv. 4. The words, "his lamp shall be put out," describe primarily the failure of outward happiness, the desolation of life itself.

obscure darkness] The same word is used to describe the intense central gloom of darkness, as in vii. 9.

21. The verse is clearer without the words in italics, **An inheritance gotten hastily** (greedily sought after by unjust means) at

nation unto the LORD; and [t]a false balance *is* not good.

24 [q]Man's goings *are* of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?

25 *It is* a snare to the man *who* devoureth *that which is* holy, and after vows to make inquiry.

26 [r]A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.

27 The spirit of man *is* the [1]candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

28 [s]Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.

29 The glory of young men *is* their strength: and [t]the beauty of old men *is* the gray head.

30 The blueness of a wound [†]cleanseth away evil: so *do* stripes the inward parts of the belly.

[s] Ps. 101. 1; chap. 29. 14.
[t] chap. 16. 31.
[†] Heb. is *a purging medicine against evil.*

the beginning, the end thereof shall not be blessed. The word which occupies the place of "gotten hastily," in the Hebrew text, may, however, be taken, as in Zech. xi. 8, "an inheritance loathed, or with a curse upon it." The A.V. rests on the reading of the K'ri, which has been followed by all versions.

22. The deep sense of a righteous order, awarding to every one according to his works, checks, as nothing else can check, the spirit of vindictiveness. (So Rom. xii. 17, 19.) Yet it is to be noted that the man is not told to wait on the Lord in expectation of seeing vengeance on his enemies, but "He shall save thee." The difference of the two hopes, in their effect upon the man's character, is, of course, incalculable.

24. The order of a man's life is a mystery even to himself. He knows not whither he is going, or for what God is educating him.

25. *devoureth*] Better, **It is a snare to a man to utter a vow** (of consecration) **rashly, and after vows to enquire**, sc. whether he can fulfil them. So taken, the parallelism is more complete, and both clauses are a protest against the besetting sin of rash and hasty vows, as in Eccles. v. 1, 2. Comp. Note below.

26. *the wheel*] sc. the **threshing-wheel** (Isai. xxviii. 27, 28), which passes over the corn and separates the grain from the chaff. The proverb involves therefore the idea of the division of the good from the evil, no less than that of the punishment of the latter.

27. *The spirit of man*] The "breath" of Gen. ii. 7, the higher life, above that which he has in common with lower animals, coming to him direct from God. Such a life, with all its powers of insight, consciousness, reflection, is as a lamp which God has lighted, throwing its rays into the darkest recesses of the heart. We are here, as in ch. viii., halfway to the higher truth proclaimed in the Prologue of St John's Gospel. The candle, or lamp of Jehovah, derives its light from "the Light that lighteth every man," from the Eternal Word.

30. Better, taking the same predicate as applicable to both clauses, **The blueness of a wound is a cleansing of evil, so are the stripes that go down to the inward parts of the belly.**

The A.V. by introducing the verb "do" in the second clause misses the point of the proverb. Here, again, there is a kind of paradox. "The open sores of wounds left by the scourge, unclean and foul as they seem, are yet a cleansing, purifying process for evil, so also are the stripes that reach the inward parts of the belly, sc. the sharp reproofs, the stings of conscience, which penetrate where no scourge can reach, into the inner life of man." The words, "inward parts of the belly," obviously derive their interpretation from the verse (*v.* 27) which the writer had before his eyes. To see in both clauses, as some have done, a mere iteration of the maxim that sharp corporal chastisement is a means of reformation, is to lose all the depth of their teaching. What is said is that the chastisement, whatever be its nature, must be real; the scourge must leave its mark, the reproof must go deep.

NOTE on CHAP. XX. 25.

The difficulty of the verse lies in the word יָלַע, which meets us here only, and the meaning of which must therefore be more or less conjectural. On the one side, it has been connected with לוּעַ, which occurs in Obad. 16 in the sense of "swallow down," "devour," and is thus taken by the Vulg. and the A.V. On the other, most recent commentators look on it as cognate with לָעָה, with the sense of "speaking rashly." In the construction of the sentence we have either to assume (with most older interpreters) that the word יָלַע is the 3rd pers. perf., and understand an אִם before it, or, with Ewald, to alter the punctuation and take it as a substantive, "the rash utterance of a word of consecration."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

2 [a] Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

3 [b] To do justice and judgment *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

4 [c] † An high look, and a proud heart, *and* ‖ the plowing of the wicked, *is* sin.

5 The thoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plenteousness; but of every one *that is* hasty only to want.

6 [d] The getting of treasures by a lying tongue *is* a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.

7 The robbery of the wicked shall † destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.

8 The way of man *is* froward and strange: but *as for* the pure, his work *is* right.

9 [e] *It is* better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with † a brawling woman in † a wide house.

10 [f] The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour † findeth no favour in his eyes.

11 [g] When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when

[a] chap. 16. 2.
[b] 1 Sam. 15. 22. chap. 15. 8. Isai. 1. 11. Hos. 6. 6. Mic. 6. 7, 8.
[c] chap. 6. 17.
† Heb. *Haughtiness of eyes.*
‖ Or, *the light of the wicked.*
[d] chap. 10. 2. & 13. 11.
† Heb. *saw them* or, *dwell with them.*
[e] chap. 19. 13. & 25. 24. & 27. 15.
† Heb. *a woman of contentions.*
† Heb. *an house of society.*
[f] James 4. 5.
† Heb. *is not favoured.*
[g] chap. 19. 25.

CHAP. XXI. 1. *rivers of water*] sc. not the broad-flowing stream, but the small runnels or streamlets into which the water flows in artificial irrigation (see note on Ps. i. 3). As the cultivator directs the stream into the channels where it is most wanted, so Jehovah directs the thoughts of the true king, that his favours may fall, not at random, but in harmony with a divine order.

2. A repetition in all but identical terms of xvi. 2.

3. The thoughts of the wise of heart as to the essential conditions of true worship agree with the teaching of the prophets (1 S. xv. 22; Isai. i. 11, 16; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6, 7), but have a special significance as coming from the king who had been the builder of the Temple, and had offered sacrifices that "could not be told nor numbered for magnitude" (1 K. viii. 5)

4. *the plowing of the wicked*] The same word with a change in its vowel-points may signify either (1) "fallow-field," as above in xiii. 23, and Hos. x. 12, or (2) **lamp.** If we take (1), the meaning will be "The outward signs of pride, the proud heart, the broad lands of the wicked, all are evil." The other phrase is, however, better supported, and occurring as it does in xiii. 9, xxiv. 20, and Job xxi. 17, belongs, as it were, to the language of the time and of the book. The sense is, of course, substantially the same. The "lamp of the wicked" is their outwardly bright prosperity.

5. In previous proverbs diligence had been contrasted with sloth. Here it is opposed to haste. Extremes meet, and undue hurry is as fatal to success as undue procrastination.

6. Adopting the received Hebrew text, and giving to the word translated "vanity" its primary meaning, the verse would run thus: "The getting of treasures by a lying tongue,—it is a **breath** driven to and fro of those that are seeking death." A various reading (adopted by the LXX. and found in many MSS.) gives for the last clause, "of the snares of death." So taken, they are, in part, reproduced in St Paul's words that "they who will be rich fall into temptation and *a snare*" (1 Tim. vi. 9). Some commentators have suggested that the "vapour" or "mist" is the mirage of the desert, misleading those who follow it, becoming a "net of death." With this rendering we may compare a like proverb in the Koran, Sura xxiv. 40, "The deeds of the unbelievers are like the *Serâb* (sc. the mirage) in the wilderness. The thirsty takes it for water, but he pushes on to it, and finds nothing." It is doubtful, however, whether the word can bear this meaning.

7. *robbery*] The word may mean either the "violence" which the wicked practise, or the destruction which comes on them—more probably the former.

shall destroy them] More literally, **carries them away.** There is no adequate reason for adopting either of the marginal renderings, "saw," or "dwell with, them."

8. The word rendered by "strange" probably means "laden with guilt," and the clause would run thus, "Perverse is the way of a sin-burdened man."

9. *a wide house*] Literally, "a house of companionship," sc. **a house shared with her.**

The flat roof of an eastern house was often used for retirement by day, or in summer for sleep by night. But the corner of such a roof was of course exposed to all changes of weather, and the point of the proverb lies in the thought that all winds

the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

12 The righteous *man* wisely considereth the house of the wicked: *but God* overthroweth the wicked for *their* wickedness.

13 [k]Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

14 [i]A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

15 *It is* joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

16 The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.

17 He that loveth [1]pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

18 [k]The wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.

19 [l]*It is* better to dwell [†]in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

20 *There is* treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.

21 He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

22 [m]A wise *man* scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.

[k] ...att. 18.
[i] ...ap. 17. ...18. 16.
[1] Or, *sport.*
[k] chap. 11. 8.
[l] ver. 9.
[†] Heb. *in the land of the desert.*
[m] Eccles. 9. 14.

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and storms which a man might meet with there are more endurable than the tempest within.

11. The same comparison of the two final causes of punishment as in xix. 25.

12. The Righteous One (sc. Jehovah, see Job xxxiv. 17) **regardeth well the house of the wicked, and maketh the wicked fall into mischief.** The insertion of the name of "God" as the subject of the second clause, though it gives the true meaning, is not necessary, and that of "man" in the first, obscures the sense. So Rosenmüller, Ewald, Bertheau.

14. The verb rendered "pacifieth" is found here only, and its meaning is consequently open to conjecture. "To bend," "to extinguish," "to still," are all etymologically tenable, and each gives a sufficient sense.

16. *congregation of the dead*] sc. the Rephaim, as in ix. 18. A slight tone of irony is perceptible in the word for "abide." "He shall find a resting-place, but it shall be in Hades."

17. *wine and oil*] sc. the costly adjuncts of a princely banquet. Among these, the "oil" or precious unguent was always most conspicuous. (Ps. xxiii. 5, xlv. 7, and especially Wisd. ii. 7.) And when we consider its price, the 300 *denarii* of John xii. 5, the 300 days' wages of a field-labourer (Matt. xx. 2), we can well understand how indulgence in such a luxury would become the type of all extravagance and excess.

18. The meaning is at first sight startling enough, and its seeming contrast to the great truth of Christian belief makes it still more so. "The wicked is an atonement, a propitiation (the word is the same as that of the mercy-seat, or ἱλαστήριον) for the righteous." The words point, however, to a law of God's moral government, like that set forth in xi. 3. Evil doers seem to draw down the wrath of God upon their heads, and so become, as it were, the scapegoats of the comparatively righteous. So in Isai. xliii. 3 Egypt and Ethiopia are said to be a "ransom" for Israel, *i.e.* they are visited severely, while it escapes. The LXX., it may be noted, renders "ransom" by περικάθαρμα, the word used by St Paul of himself in 1 Cor. iv. 13.

20. *oil*] As before, the precious unguent which represents wealth.

spendeth it up] Lit. **swalloweth it.** As a maxim of economy the meaning is simple enough. The wise man keeps a store in reserve. He gains uprightly, spends moderately, never exhausts himself. But the proverb may have also a higher application. The wise man stores up all "treasure to be desired" of wisdom, all "oil" of divine influence, which strengthens and refreshes, and so is ready at all times for the work to which the Master calls him. Comp. the Parable of the wise and foolish Virgins, Matt. xxv. 1—13.

21. The repetition of "righteousness" in the second clause is obviously emphatic. The man who keeps that will assuredly find it, but he will find besides it the "life" and the "honour" which he was not seeking. Comp. 1 K. iii. 11; Matt. vi. 33.

22. Here again the meaning is at once literal and figurative. Even in war, counsel does more than brute strength. But the proverb is also a parable, and may be transferred to the warfare which is carried on in the inner battle-field of the soul. There also wisdom

23 [a]Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

24 Proud *and* haughty scorner *is* his name, who dealeth [1]in proud wrath.

25 [o]The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

26 He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the [p]righteous giveth and spareth not.

27 [q]The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it [1]with a wicked mind?

28 [r][1]A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.

29 A wicked man hardeneth his face: but *as for* the upright, he [1]directeth his way.

30 [s]*There is* no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

31 [t]The horse *is* prepared against the day of battle: but [u][1]safety *is* of the LORD.

[a] chap. 12. 13. & 18. 21. [1] Heb. *in the wrath of pride.* [o] chap. 13. 4. [p] Ps. 112. 9. [q] Ps. 50. 9. chap. 15. 8. Isai. 66. 3. Jer. 6. 20. Amos 5. 22. [1] Heb. *in wickedness.* [r] chap. 19. 5, 9. [1] Heb. *A witness of lies.* [1] Or, *considereth.* [s] Jer. 9. 23. [t] Ps. 33. 17. [u] Ps. 3. 8. [1] Or, *victory.*

CHAPTER XXII.

[a] A *GOOD* name *is* rather to be chosen than great riches, *and* [1]loving favour rather than silver and gold.

2 [b]The rich and poor meet together: the LORD *is* the maker of them all.

3 [c]A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

4 [d][1]By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches, and honour, and life.

[a] Eccles. 7. 1. [1] Or, *favour is better than &c.* [b] chap. 29. 13. [c] chap. 27. 12. [d] Ps. 112. [1] Or, *The reward of humility &c.*

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is mighty to the "pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. x. 4, where St Paul uses the very words of the LXX. version of this passage), and the wise man scales and keeps the city which the strong man armed has seized and made his own.

24. The omission of the conjunction gives greater emphasis, "proud, haughty, scorner, —the name of him," &c.

25. *killeth him*] sc. wastes his strength and life in unsatisfied longings for something which he has not energy to gain. The common saying, that "Hell is paved with good intentions," offers something parallel. The wish to do great things, or good things is not enough. It may sometimes be taken for the deed, but if the hindrance is from within, from the man's own sloth, it does but add to his condemnation.

26. The subject of the verb has to be supplied. This may be done either, as in the A.V., from the previous verse, or by some such word as "the wicked" implied as the antithesis to "the righteous" of the second clause. In either case we have a slight anomaly, but the former seems on the whole preferable, and is supported by greater authority.

all the day long] Better, **every day**. The wish of the slothful man passes into restless, covetous, dissatisfied desire; the righteous, free from that desire, gives without grudging.

27. More than a simple repetition of the teaching of xv. 8. There is a lower depth even than the sacrifice of the wicked offered in impenitence. He may connect his devotion with his guilt, offer his sacrifice and vow his vow (as men have done under heathenism or a corrupted Christianity) for success in the perpetration of a crime.

28. *the man that heareth*] He who repeats simply what he has heard, whether from the lips of men or from the voice within, is contrasted with "the false witness." The lie of the latter perishes, the former "speaks constantly," his testimony abides evermore.

29. *directeth*] sc. **makes straight** and firm. There is a boldness on both sides, but on one side it is the callousness of guilt, on the other the confidence of integrity.

30, 31. Two companion-proverbs. Nothing avails against, nothing without, God. *v.* 31 has a parallel in Ps. xxxiii. 17. The horse appears here, as elsewhere in the Old Testament, as the type of warlike strength, used chiefly or exclusively in battle. Solomon's alliance with Egypt, and the large importation of war-horses that followed on it (1 K. iv. 26, x. 26—28), may be thought of as having given occasion to the latter of the two proverbs.

CHAP. XXII. **1.** The word "good" is an insertion. To the Hebrew this noun "name" (as in Job. xxx. 8 marg.; Eccles. vii. 1; Ecclus. xli. 12), by itself conveyed the idea of good repute, just as "the men without a name" in Job xxx. 8 are those sunk in ignominy. The marg., **favour is better than** silver and gold, gives a preferable rendering.

2. Another recognition, as in xiv. 31; Job xxxi. 15, of the oneness of a common humanity, overriding all distinctions of rank.

4. *By humility and the fear of the LORD*]

5 Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.

6 ‖Train up a child †in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

7 The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower *is* servant †to the lender.

8 [e]He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: ‖and the rod of his anger shall fail.

9 [f]†He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

10 [g]Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

11 He that loveth pureness of heart, ‖*for* the grace of his lips the king *shall be* his friend.

12 The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and he overthroweth ‖the words of the transgressor.

13 [h]The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

14 [i]The mouth of strange women *is* a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

15 Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* [k]the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

16 He that oppresseth the poor to increase his *riches*, *and* he that giveth to the rich, *shall* surely *come* to want.

17 Bow down thine ear, and hear

‖ Or, *Catechise.*
† Heb. *in his way.*
† Heb. *to the man that lendeth.*
[e] Job 4. 8. Hos. 10. 13.
‖ Or, *and with the rod of his anger he shall be consumed.*
[f] 2 Cor. 9. 6.
† Heb. *Good of eye.*
[g] Ps. 101. 5.
‖ Or, *and hath grace in his lips*
‖ Or, *the matters.*
[h] chap. 26. 13.
[i] chap. 2. 16. & 5. 3. & 7. 5. & 23. 27.
[k] chap. 13. 24. & 19. 18. & 23. 13. & 29. 15, 17.

The omission of the conjunction in the original marks the likeness, approaching to identity, of the two nouns in apposition. A better meaning is given by the marginal reading, **The reward of humility**, the Hebrew word, which sometimes passes into the preposition "by," retaining here its full force as a substantive. The words of the second clause "riches, and honour, and life" are the predicate of the sentence, defining what the reward is.

6. *Train*] Primarily = to press into, initiate, and so, to educate. The marg. "catechize" seems to have originated in the wish to connect the proverb with the most common English method of instruction.

the way he should go] The words should be read with a certain emphasis on the pronoun. The Hebrew, **according to the tenor of his way**, means the path specially belonging to, specially fitted for, the individual's character. Instead of sanctioning a rigorous monotony of discipline under the notion that it is "the right way," the proverb enjoins the closest possible study of each child's temperament and the adaptation of "his way of life" to that.

8. *the rod of his anger*] sc. that with which he smites others (comp. Isai. xiv .6). The A.V. describes the final impotence of the wrath of the wicked.

9. *He that hath a bountiful eye*] Literally, "He that is good of eye," as contrasted with the "evil eye" of xxviii. 22.

11. The construction of the Hebrew is obscure, but the A.V. gives its meaning with fair accuracy. More literally, "He that loveth pureness of heart, his lips are gracious, the king is his friend."

13. The special point of satire is the ingenuity with which the slothful man devises the most improbable alarms. He hears that "there is a lion without," sc. in the broad open country; he is afraid of being slain in the very streets of the city.

14. The first impression made by the second clause is that it offers a parallel to the mediæval proverb, "Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat." The fall of the man into the snare of the harlot seems to be the consequence of the abhorrence or wrath of Jehovah. The man is left to himself, and sin becomes the penalty of sin. That abhorrence is, however, the result of previous evil. Men's pleasant vices are made whips to scourge them.

15. "Yet," rather than "but" (if a conjunction need be inserted at all), would better express the relation between the two clauses.

16. The numerous italics in the A.V. indicate the obscurity of the original. A better rendering is, **He who oppresses the poor for his own profit gives** (*i.e.* will, in the common course of things, be compelled to give) **to a rich man, and that only to his own loss.** The ill-gotten gains do not prosper, and only expose the oppressor to extortion and violence in his turn.

17. The chapter runs on in the Hebrew as in the English, with no sign that there ought to be a break. Obviously, however, we have here the commencement of a new and entirely distinct section, opening, after the fashion of

the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

18 For *it is* a pleasant thing if thou keep them †within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.

† Heb. *in thy belly.*

19 That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, ‖even to thee.

‖ Or, *trust thou also.*

20 Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

21 That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth ‖to them that send unto thee?

‖ Or, *to those that send thee.*

22 Rob not the poor, because he *is* poor: [l]neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:

[l] Zech. 7. 10.

23 [m]For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

[m] Job 31. 14. chap. 23. 11.

24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

25 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

26 [n]Be not thou *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts.

[n] chap. 6. 1 & 11. 15.

27 If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?

28 [o]Remove not the ancient ‖landmark, which thy fathers have set.

[o] Deut. 19. 14. & 27. 17. chap. 23. 10.

‖ Or, *bound.*

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iii. 1, 21, iv. 1, vii. 1, with a general exhortation (17—21) and passing on to special precepts. The title "words of the wise" has to be noted in connection with xxiv. 23. The general characteristics of this section appear to be (1) a less close attention to the laws of parallelism, and (2) a tendency to longer and more complicated sentences. Comp. Introduction, p. 525.

18. The counsels of the wise should be not in the heart only, or on the lips only, but on the lips from the abundance of the heart. What is "pleasant" in the sight of God and man is the union of the two, belief passing into profession, profession resting on belief.

19. *even to thee*] If we retain the A. V., which grammatically is tenable, the emphatic repetition of the pronoun is meant to convey the thought that the wide general character of the teaching does not hinder its being a personal message to every one who reads it. "De te fabula narratur."

20. *excellent things*] The A. V. follows the K'ri or marginal reading of the Hebrew as to the vowel-points, and translates a word which etymologically signifies "the third," sc. "the chief of three warriors in a chariot," by its derived meaning of "chief, principal, excellent" (comp. note on Exod. xiv. 7). The renderings of the LXX. and Vulgate are curious enough to deserve notice; the former giving "write them for thyself three times;" the latter, "I have written it (sc. my counsel) in three-fold form." The reading of the Hebrew text would give "Have I not written to thee long ago?" and this would form a natural antithesis to the "this day" of the previous verse. The Chaldee and Syriac versions agree with the Vulgate. So taken, the "three times" or "three-fold form" have been referred either to the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, or to the division of the Old Testament into the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa.

21. *to them that send unto thee*] The margin, **those that send thee**, gives a better meaning and is true to the original; comp. x. 26. The man who has learnt the certainty of the words of truth will learn to observe it in all that men commit to him.

22. *because he is poor*] The A.V., like the Hebrew, is ambiguous, and may mean either, "Do not be tempted by the helplessness of the poor man to do him wrong," or "Refrain from doing him wrong through pity for his helplessness." Most commentators take it in the former sense, but the latter seems, on the whole, preferable.

in the gate] sc. in the place where the rulers of the city sit in judgment. The words point to the special form of oppression of which unjust judges are the instruments.

26. *of them that strike hands*] sc. as in vi. 1, xvii. 18, as the pledge by which they bind themselves as surety for what another owes.

27. *why should he*] *i.e.* the man to whom the surety has been given. The practice of carrying distraint for payment of a debt to this extent, seems, in spite of the express prohibition of the law (Exod. xxii. 27), to have become common.

28. The primary application, possibly even the only one, makes the words a protest against the grasping covetousness which leads men to add house to house, and field to field (Isai. v. 8), regardless of the rights of the poor upon whose inheritance they encroach.

29 Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before †mean *men*.

†Heb. *obscure men*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHEN thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee:

2 And put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite.

3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat.

4 [a]Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

[a] 1 Tim. 6. 10.

5 †Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

†Heb. *wilt thou cause thine eyes to fly upon*.

6 Eat thou not the bread of *him that hath* an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee.

8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

9 Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

10 [b]Remove not the old ‖landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:

11 [c]For their redeemer *is* mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

[b] Deut. 19. 14. & 27. 17. chap. 22. 28.
‖ Or, *bound*.
[c] Job 31. 21. chap. 22. 23.

In xxiii. 10 this is manifestly the one meaning present to the mind of the writer, as it is also in Deut. xix. 14, xxvii. 17; Hos. v. 10; Job xxiv. 2. The not uncommon reference of the words to the "landmarks" of thought or custom, however natural and legitimate, is foreign to the mind of the writer.

29. The diligent man is to be in the right place. The gift of a quick and ready intellect is to lead to high office and ministries of state, is not to be wasted on a work to which the obscure and unknown are adequate.

CHAP. XXIII. **1.** *what is before thee*] sc. beware lest his dainties tempt thee to excess. It is better, however, to take the pronoun in the masculine, "consider diligently **who is before thee**," the character and temper of the ruler who invites thee.

2. If we keep the imperative, the sense is "restrain thy appetite, eat as if the knife were at thy throat." Others, however, render it "thou wilt put a knife to thy throat," &c.; "indulgence at such a time may endanger thy very life."

3. *dainties*] The word is the same in meaning and nearly the same in form as the "savoury meat," sc. venison, of Gen. xxvii. 4.

deceitful meat] sc. offered not from genuine hospitality, but with some by-ends.

4. *cease from thine own wisdom*] The sense is determined by the context. "Cease even from thy prudence, from the use of what is in itself most excellent, if it only serves to seek after wealth, and so ministers to evil." "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." There is no special stress on the contrast between "thine own wisdom" and that given from above, though it is of course implied that in ceasing from his own prudence the man is on the way to attain a higher wisdom.

5. *set thine eyes*] Literally, as in the margin, we should read, **make thine eyes to fly**, sc. "gaze eagerly upon;" and then we get an emphatic parallelism with the words that follow, "they fly away as an eagle towards heaven;" "certainly make themselves wings." Literally, with the emphasis of reduplication, according to Hebrew usage, "They make, they make themselves wings." The word "riches," not in the Hebrew, is supplied from the adjective "rich" in the preceding verse.

6. Not an identical danger with that of *v.* 1, but altogether different. There is a hazard in the hospitality of princes. There is also a hazard in that of the purse-proud rich, avaricious or grudging, even in his banquets.

evil eye] Not with the later associations of a mysterious power for mischief, but simply, as in Deut. xv. 9; Matt. xx. 15, in the sense of "hard, grudging, envious."

7. *as he thinketh*] The Hebrew verb is found here only, and has received many interpretations: (1) "as he is all along in his heart, so is he (sc. at last) in act;" (2) "as he reckons in his heart, so is he;" sc. he counts the cost of every morsel thou eatest, and hates thee in proportion. Of these (1) seems to be best, as supported by Arabic usage.

9. The "fool" here is not, like the "simple" of i. 22, vii. 7, open to instruction, but one wilfully and persistently deaf to it, identical, almost if not entirely, with the scorner.

11. Here a reason is given for the precept

12 Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

13 [d] Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

15 My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, [1] even mine.

16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.

17 [e] Let not thine heart envy sinners: but *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

18 [f] For surely there is an [1] end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.

19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.

20 [g] Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters [†] of flesh:

21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe *a man* with rags.

22 [h] Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

23 Buy the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

24 [i] The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise *child* shall have joy of him.

25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.

26 My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

27 [k] For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

[d] chap. 13. 24. & 19. 18. & 22. 15.
[1] Or, *even I will rejoice.*
[e] Ps. 37. 1. & 73. 3. chap. 3. 31. & 24. 1.
[f] chap. 24. 14.
[1] Or, *reward.*
[g] Rom. 13. 13. Eph. 5. 18.
[†] Heb. *of their flesh.*
[h] chap. 1. 8
[i] chap. 10. 1. & 15. 20.
[k] chap. 22. 14.

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which in xxii. 28 stood by itself. "Their Redeemer is mighty." The word is the same as in Job xix. 25 (where see note), and is used in its earlier meaning. It was the duty of the *Goel*, the next of kin, to take on himself, in case of murder, the office of avenger of blood (Num. xxxv. 19). By a slight extension the word was applied to one who took on himself a like office in cases short of homicide, and so gained the more general meaning of redeemer, avenger, defender. Here, therefore, the thought is that, destitute as the fatherless may seem, there is One who claims them as His next of kin, and will avenge them. Jehovah Himself is in this sense their *Goel*, their Redeemer.

13, 14. An expansion of the thought of xix. 18. "You will not kill your son by scourging him, you may kill him by withholding the scourge."

14. *from hell*] sc. from Sheol, Hades, the world of the dead.

15—35. Another continuous exhortation, in the same strain as the earlier chapters, rather than a collection of maxims.

15. *even mine*] Emphasis of repetition, as in xxii. 19.

16. Parallel to *v.* 15, but carrying the thought further. The teacher rejoices when the disciple's heart receives wisdom, yet more when his lips can utter it.

reins] Here, as in Job xix. 27; Pss. vii. 9, lxxiii. 21, and elsewhere, the "reins," as being among the most inward of the "inward parts" of the body, are looked on as the seat of the deepest and strongest emotions.

17. *envy sinners*] As in Pss. xxxvii. 1, lxxiii. 3, the feeling which looks half longingly at the prosperity of evil doers.

be thou in the fear of the Lord] The A.V. follows the LXX. and Vulgate in separating the two clauses and inserting the imperative verb in order to complete the second, and has the support of Rosenmüller, Bertheau, and other commentators. Others, however (Jarchi, Umbreit, Hitzig), connect the verb "envy" with both clauses, "envy not sinners, but envy, sc. emulate, the fear of the Lord."

18. The words are better taken as a conditional clause. **For if there is an end** (sc. hereafter), **thine expectation shall not be cut off.** In either case, as the hope is referred to the end of life, there is an implied confidence in immortality.

20. *riotous eaters of flesh*] By some the words have been referred to sins of lust, but the rendering of the text is preferable. The word is the same as "glutton" in *v.* 21 and Deut. xxi. 20.

21. Here, again, the three forms of evil that destroy reputation and tempt to waste are brought together.

drowsiness] Specially the drunken sleep, heavy and confused.

26. The English version agrees with the LXX. and Vulgate in following the marginal reading of the Hebrew. The existing Hebrew text gives, "let thine eyes *delight* in my ways."

Chap. 7. Or, as a robber.

28 ^l^She also lieth in wait ^1^as *for* a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.

Isai. 5. 11.

29 ^m^Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like ^1^an adder.

Or, a cockatrice.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down ^†^in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

† Heb. *in the heart of the sea.*

35 They have stricken me, *shalt thou say, and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* ^†^I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

† Heb. *I knew* it *not.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

BE not thou ^a^envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.

^a^ Ps. 37. 1, &c. & 73. 3. chap. 23. 17. ver. 19.

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28. *as for a prey*] The Hebrew occurs here only, but the marginal reading, **as a robber**, is preferable.

increaseth the transgressors] Better, as elsewhere, "the treacherous;" or, perhaps, "those that attack men treacherously."

29. *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?*] The words corresponding to the two substantives are, strictly speaking, interjections. "Who hath *oh*, who hath *abô*;" a word not found elsewhere, but probably an interjection, expressing distress. The sharp touch of the satirist reproduces the actual inarticulate utterances of drunkenness.

redness of eyes] The etymology of the word is doubtful. Some render it by "dimness" or "confusion." The whole passage may be compared with Lucretius's picture of drunkenness: 'De Rer. Nat.' III. 478,

"Consequitur gravitas membrorum, præpediuntur
Crura vacillanti, tardescit lingua, madet mens,
Nant oculi; clamor, singultus, jurgia gliscunt."

30. *mixed wine*] sc. flavoured with aromatic spices, that increase its stimulating properties (Isai. v. 22). There is a touch of sarcasm in "go to seek." The word elsewhere used of diligent search after knowledge (Job xi. 7: Ps. cxxxix. 1; Prov. xxv. 2) is here used, as if ironically, of the investigations of connoisseurs in wine meeting to test its qualities.

31. The wine of Lebanon is said to be of a rich golden colour, like Malaga, or the darker sherries. Sometimes the colour is heightened by saffron.

when it giveth his colour] Lit. "its eye," the clear **brightness**, or the beaded bubbles on which the wine-drinker looks with complacency.

when it moveth itself aright] The English suggests the thought of a sparkling wine, but the Hebrew word, here and in S. of S. vii. 9, where it is rendered, "goeth down sweetly," describes rather the pellucid stream flowing pleasantly from the wine-skin or jug into the goblet, or the throat.

32. The second word, "adder," is the more specific, and is said to be the Cerastes, or horned snake, the first more generic.

33. *strange women*] By some the word has been taken with a neuter signification, "strange things," as giving a better parallelism to the second clause. The frequent occurrence of the word, however, in this book, as applied to harlots, justifies the English version, which is supported by most commentators.

34. The passage is interesting, as shewing, what Pss. civ. 25, 26, cvii. 23—30 also shew, the increased familiarity of Israelites with the experiences of sea-life.

in the midst of the sea] Lit. "in the heart;" sc. when the ship is in the trough of the sea and the man is on the deck. The second clause varies the form of danger, the man is in the "cradle" at the top of the mast, and sleeps there, regardless of the danger.

The Vulg., following, it would seem, a different reading, gives the striking variation, "as a pilot who falls asleep, having lost his rudder." The text, as it is, is correctly rendered by the A.V.

35. The picture ends with the words of the drunkard on waking from his sleep. He has been unconscious of the excesses and outrages of the night, and his first thought is to return to his old habit.

when shall I awake?] Better, omitting the interrogation, **when I shall awake I will seek it yet again.**

CHAP. XXIV. **1.** Repeats a lesson given before, but combines it with another. The true followers after wisdom will admit neither

b Ps. 10. 7.

2 [b]For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

3 Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:

4 And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

† Heb. is *in strength*. † Heb. *strengtheneth might*.

5 A wise man †*is* strong; yea, a man of knowledge †increaseth strength.

c chap. 11. 14. & 15. 22. & 20. 18.

6 [c]For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellers *there is* safety.

7 Wisdom *is* too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.

8 He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.

9 The thought of foolishness *is* sin: and the scorner *is* an abomination to men.

† Heb. *narrow*.

10 *If* thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength *is* †small.

d Ps. 82. 4.

11 [d]If thou forbear to deliver *them that are* drawn unto death, and *those that are* ready to be slain;

12 If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it?* and he that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it?* and shall *not* he render to *every* man [e]according to his works?

e Job 34. 11. Ps. 62. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Rom. 2. 6. Rev. 22. 12.

13 My son, eat thou honey, because *it is* good; and the honeycomb, *which is* sweet †to thy taste:

† Heb. *upon thy palate*.

14 [f]So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be* unto thy soul: when thou hast found *it*, [g]then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

f Ps. 19. 10. & 119. 103. g chap. 23. 18.

15 Lay not wait, O wicked *man*, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:

h Job 5. 19. Ps. 34. 19. & 37. 24.

16 [h]For a just *man* falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

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envy on the one hand, nor admiration or fellowship with evil on the other.

4. As the "house" of *v.* 3 is figurative of the whole life, so are the "chambers" here of all regions, inward and outward, of it.

5. *is strong*] Lit. "is in strength"—rooted and established in it.

6. Combines two half-proverbs which have appeared before, xx. 18, xi. 14.

7. *in the gate*] Comp. note on xxii. 22.

11. Literally the words run thus:

"Deliver those that are drawn unto death,
And those who totter to the slaughter—
if thou withdraw...."

But the "if" is that of strong desire, and the last clause reiterates the entreaty of the first, "O withdraw them," *i.e.* save them from their doom. So taken, the words present a contrast to *v.* 10. Instead of fainting in the day of adversity, the man is to help others to the uttermost of his power. The structure and meaning are both somewhat obscure. On one point, however, all commentators appear to be agreed, sc. that the sentence is complete in itself, and is not a mere hypothetical clause which has its conclusion in the following verses.

12. This, like the former verse, points to the sin of men when they are brought into contact with those who are unjustly accused. As that warned them against acquiescing in an unrighteous tyranny, so this denounces the tendency to hush up a wrong with the false plea of ignorance, "We knew nothing of it," and reminds the judges that there is "One higher than the highest, Who regards it." Comp. Eccles. v. 8 The three verses thus form a complete and connected whole.

13. *honey*] We seem to hear an echo of Ps. xix. 10. Partly perhaps the figure rises out of the fact that honey entered largely into the diet of Hebrew children (Isai. vii. 15), so that it was as natural an emblem for the purest and simplest wisdom, as the "sincere milk of the word" was to the New Testament writers. The comparison, it will be noticed, is not at first formally expressed. The learner hears what seems a rule of diet—then the parable is explained.

14. *the knowledge of wisdom*] It is better to take the Hebrew as an imperative, **Know that thus** (sc. like the honey) **is wisdom to thy soul.**

15, 16. The latter of these two verses is so often carelessly but wrongly quoted as a half-apology for sin, "The righteous falleth *i.e.* sinneth, seven times a day," that it is necessary to put its true meaning in the clearest light possible. The Hebrew word for "falleth" is never used of falling into sin, and the teaching of the proverb is simply that men are warned not to attack or plot against the righteous. They will lose their labour, "Though the just man fall (not into sin, but

b 31. 35. 15. p. 17. 5. 17 [i]Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

eb. *it vil in eyes.* 18 Lest the LORD see *it*, and †it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

s. 37. 1. p. 23. 19 [k] [l]Fret not thyself because of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked;

Keep com- with wicked. 20 For there shall be no reward to the evil *man*; [l]the [l]candle of the wicked shall be put out.

b 21. 17. n. 13. 9. *lamp.* 21 My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: *and* meddle not with †them that are given to change:

eb. *ngers.* 22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?

23 These *things* also *belong* to the wise. [m]*It is* not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

m Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. & 16. 19. chap. 18. 5. & 28. 21. John 7. 24.

24 [n]He that saith unto the wicked, Thou *art* righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

n chap. 17. 15. Isai. 5. 23.

25 But to them that rebuke *him* shall be delight, and †a good blessing shall come upon them.

† Heb. *a blessing of good.*

26 *Every man* shall kiss *his* lips †that giveth a right answer.

† Heb. *that answereth right words.*

27 Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

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into calamities), yet he riseth up." The point of the teaching is not the liability of even good men to err, but God's providential care over them, as in Ps. xxxiv. 19. "Seven times" is, of course, a certain for an uncertain number, as in the parallel passage of Job v. 19. In contrast with this is the fate of the evil-doers, who fall utterly even in a single distress.

17, 18. The first impression made by this precept is one of seeming inconsistency. We are told not to rejoice in the misfortunes of an enemy, lest in so doing we should, against our will, diminish their pressure or their duration. We seem, that is, to be led to a far-sighted calculation how we may prolong the joy which we are told is wrong. The explanation of the paradox is found in the words, "Lest the Lord see it, and it **be evil in His eyes**," sc. "Thy joy will be suicidal, the wrath of the righteous Judge will be turned upon thee, as the greater offender, and thou wilt have to bear a worse evil than that which thou exultest in."

19. The words agree almost verbally with those of Ps. xxxvii. 1, speak of the same difficulty and suggest the same answer.

20. *there shall be no reward*] Literally, "there shall be no future," sc. no life worthy to be called life, no blessing.

21. *them that are given to change*] sc., as defined by the preceding clause, those that seek to set aside the worship of the true God, or the authority of the true king, who represents Him.

22. *who knoweth the ruin of them both?*] sc. no one knows, it will come suddenly upon the two alike, upon those that fear not God, upon those who fear not the king.

23. *belong to the wise*] The Hebrew is ambiguous, and may mean either "are fitting for the wise, addressed to them," or (the preposition being taken as the "ל *auctoris*," as in the superscriptions of many of the Psalms) "are written by the wise." Most recent commentators (Hitzig, Bertheau, Ewald) take it in the latter sense, and look on it as indicating the beginning of a fresh section, containing proverbs not ascribed to Solomon's authorship. Compare the Introduction, p. 525.

25. The counterpart of the foregoing. There is no surer path even to a wide popularity than a righteous severity in punishing and repressing guilt.

26. Better thus, **He shall kiss lips that giveth a right answer**, sc. shall gain the hearts of men as much as by all outward signs of sympathy and favour. So when Absalom "stole the hearts" of the men of Israel, it was partly by the "right answers," partly by actual salutation. 2 S. xv. 1—6.

27. The precept seems at first to be economical rather than ethical—Agriculture before building, getting an estate into good order before erecting a house on it, this seems to be recommended as the true order. To "build a house" has, however, a figurative as well as a literal meaning, and may be equivalent here, as elsewhere (Exod. i. 21; Deut. xxv. 9; Ruth iv. 11), to "founding a family." So interpreted, the words are a warning against a hasty and imprudent marriage. The young man is taught to cultivate his land before he has to bear the burdens of a family. Possibly, however, a spiritual meaning here, as elsewhere, lies beneath the prudential maxim. The "field" may be the man's outer common work, the "house" the dwelling-place of his higher life. He must do the former faithfully in order to attain the latter. Neglect in one is fatal to

28 Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive *not* with thy lips.

29 [a] Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

[a] chap. 20. 22.

30 I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

31 And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, *and* nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

32 Then I saw, *and* † considered *it* well: I looked upon *it*, *and* received instruction.

† Heb. *set my heart.*

33 [b] *Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

[b] chap. 6. 9 &c.

34 So shall thy poverty come *as* one that travelleth; and thy want as † an armed man.

† Heb. *a man of shield.*

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *Observations about kings,* 8 *and about avoiding causes of quarrels, and sundry causes thereof.*

THESE *are* also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.

2 *It is* the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings *is* to search out a matter.

3 The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings † *is* unsearchable.

† Heb. *there is no searching.*

4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

5 [a] Take away the wicked *from* before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

[a] chap. 20. 8.

6 † Put not forth thyself in the

† Heb. *Set not out thy glory.*

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the other. So interpreted, the lesson is the same as in Luke xvi. 10, 11.

28. *and deceive not with thy lips*] Better interrogatively, **wilt thou deceive with thy lips?**

29. Some have connected this with the preceding verse. "Do not let a spirit of retaliation be thy motive in giving evidence." It is better, however, to take the two separately. The teacher enters his protest against vindictiveness in every form, and thus foreshadows the yet higher lessons of the Sermon on the Mount.

30. The chapter ends with something like an apologue, more vivid and scenic in character than most of the other proverbs. And here also, emphatic as the direct teaching is, it may be taken as a parable of something yet deeper. The field and the vineyard are more than the man's earthly possessions. His neglect brings barrenness or desolation to the garden of the soul:

"Things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely."

And, as in other parables, so in this, even the accessories are significant. The "thorns" are evil habits that choke the good seed, and the "nettles" are those that are actually hurtful and offensive to others. The "wall" is the defence which laws and rules give to the inward life, and which the sluggard learns to disregard, and the "poverty" is the loss of the true riches of the soul, tranquillity, and peace, and righteousness.

33, 34. The teaching reproduces that of vi. 10, 11. See notes there.

CHAP. XXV. **1.** The words indicate, as has been said in the Introduction, p. 525, the beginning of a new section.

copied out] The word includes the ideas of a transfer (1) from oral tradition to writing; (2) from one writing to another; (3) from one language to another. Here, probably, the first meaning is dominant. The last is Talmudic rather than Biblical.

2. The earthly monarch might be, in some respects, the type of the heavenly, but here there is a marked contrast. The king presses further and further into all knowledge; God surrounds Himself as in "thick darkness," and there are secrets unrevealed even after the fullest revelation.

3. Here the other side of the thought is put forward. There is an analogy as well as a contrast. What the mind of God is to the searchers after knowledge, that the heart of the true and wise king is to those who look up from below trying to guess its counsels.

4, 5. The proverb and its interpretation are here brought into close contact. The true ideal of government is that of a watchful rule separating the evil from the good. The king himself, like the Lord Whom he represents, is to sit as "a refiner of silver," Mal. iii. 3.

6, 7. Another vice of courts meets with its rebuke. The pushing, boastful temper is, in the long run, suicidal. Pride has a fall, and it is wiser as well as nobler to take the lower place at first in humility, than to take it afterwards with shame.

presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great *men*:

7 [b] For better *it is* that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

8 Go not forth hastily to strive, lest *thou know not* what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

9 [c] Debate thy cause with thy neighbour *himself*; and [1] discover not a secret to another:

10 Lest he that heareth *it* put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

11 A word † fitly spoken *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver.

12 *As* an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, *so is* a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.

13 [d] As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, *so is* a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

14 Whoso boasteth himself † of a

[b] Luke 14. 10.

[c] Matt. 5. 25. & 18. 15.

[1] Or, *discover not the secret of another.*

† Heb. *spoken upon his wheels.*

[d] chap. 13. 17.

† Heb. *in a gift of falsehood*

Our Lord's reference to these words, in the parable of Luke xiv. 8—10, is interesting as one of the few instances in which His teaching was fashioned, as to its outward form, upon that of this book.

8. The general meaning is clear enough. It is dangerous to plunge into litigation. At all times there is the risk of failure, and if we fail, of being at the mercy of an irritated adversary. The construction of the words is, however, not without difficulties. The A.V. gets a meaning by inserting the words in italics. Without them, the clause admits of a satisfactory rendering, "lest thou do something (*i.e.*, by a kind of euphemism, something humiliating and vexatious) at the end thereof."

9. Here again we note not only a high standard of ethical refinement, but an anticipation of the highest. "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone" (Matt. xviii. 15). Yet there is a difference to be noticed as well as the agreement. Here the motive is prudential, the risk of shame, the fear of the irretrievable infamy of the betrayer of secrets. In the teaching of Christ the precept rests on the Divine Authority and the perfect Example.

11. *apples of gold*] Probably the golden-coloured fruit (comp. "aurea mala," Virg. 'Eclog.' III. 71) set in **baskets**, *i.e.* chased vessels of open-worked silver, so is a **word spoken upon its wheels** (*i.e.* moving quickly and quietly on its way).

The proverb may well be thought of as having had its origin in some kingly gift to the son of David, the work of Tyrian artists, like Hiram and his fellows. Others, as they gazed on the precious metals and the cunning work, far beyond the skill of their own countrymen, might highly admire, but the wise king saw in the costly rarity a parable of something higher. "A word well set upon the wheels of speech" excelled it. It is singular that ornamentation of this kind in the precious metals was known, even as late as in the middle ages, as *œuvre de Salomon.*

12. The theme of this proverb is of course the same as that of *v.* 11, and its occurrence in close combination with it suggests the thought that rings used as ornaments for ears, or nose, or forehead, and other trinkets formed part of the works of art spoken of in the foregoing note, and that the king had something at once pointed and wise to say of each of them.

13. Here again we have a picture of the growing luxury of the Solomonic period. The "snow in harvest" is not a shower of snow or hail, which would in fact come as terrifying and harmful rather than refreshing (comp. 1 S. xii. 17, 18, and yet more the proverb in the next chapter, xxvi. 1); but, rather, the snow of Lebanon or Hermon put into wine or other drink to make it more refreshing in the scorching heat of May or June. The king's summer-palace on Lebanon (1 K. ix. 19; S. of S. vii. 4) would make him and his courtiers familiar with a luxury which could hardly have been accessible in Jerusalem. And here also he finds a parable. More reviving even than the iced wine-cup was the faithful messenger. That the custom thus referred to was common in ancient as well as modern times we know from Xenophon ('Memorab.' II. 1, § 30, and Pliny ('Hist. Nat.' XIX. 4). In x. 26, it will be remembered, we have the other side of the picture, the vexation and annoyance caused by a messenger who cannot be trusted, compared to the sour wine that sets the teeth on edge.

14. Here again we have to bring before our minds the phenomena of an eastern climate, the drought of summer, the eager expectation of men who watch the rising clouds, and the freshening breeze, the bitter disappointment when the breeze dies off, and the clouds pass away, and the wished-for rain does not come. Like this is the disappointment caused

false gift *is like* clouds and wind without rain.

15 [e] By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

16 Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

17 [‖] Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be [†] weary of thee, and *so* hate thee.

18 [f] A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour *is* a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble *is like* a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

20 *As* he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, *and as* vinegar upon nitre, so *is* he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.

21 [g] If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

[e] Gen. 32. 4, &c. 1 Sam. 25. 24, &c. chap. 15. 1. & 16. 14.
[‖] Or, *Let thy foot be seldom in thy neighbour's house.*
[†] Heb. *full of thee.*
[f] Ps. 120. 4. chap. 12. 18.
[g] Exod. 23. 4. Rom. 12. 20.

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by him who promises much and performs little, or, it may be, nothing.

15. The general meaning reminds us of the Latin "gutta cavat lapidem;" the soft tongue, sc. winning and gentle speech, does what it seems at first least capable of doing, and overcomes obstacles which are as bones that the strongest jaws would fail to crush. It is possible that the illustration may be drawn from the use made of the tongue by beasts of prey in devouring their victims.

16. *Hast thou found honey?*] The words point to an incident like that told of Samson (Judg. xiv. 8), and of Jonathan (1 S. xiv. 27). The precept, it need hardly be said, extends to the pleasure of which honey is the symbol.

17. The proverb of *v.* 16 receives here a practical application. **Let thy foot be seldom in the house of thy friend**...Though thy visits were sweet as honey he may soon learn to loathe them.

18. *maul*] *i.e.* a heavy sledge-hammer. The word is connected with "malleus" and the verb "to maul:" its diminutive "mallet" is still in use.

19. Stress is to be laid on the uselessness of the "broken tooth" and the "foot out of joint," or **tottering**, rather than on the pain connected with them, though this is, of course, not to be excluded. The A.V. loses the emphasis and point of the Hebrew by inverting the original order, which gives precedence to the two illustrations.

20. Two examples of unwisdom and incongruity are brought together to sharpen the point of the proverb against that of which the third clause speaks: (1) that of putting off a garment when it is most needed; (2) that of pouring vinegar upon nitre or potash, and so utterly spoiling it. The effervescence caused by the mixture is perhaps taken as a type of the irritation produced by the "songs" sung out of season to a heavy heart. By some commentators (Schultens and Ewald) the word translated "nitre" is rendered "wound," partly on the ground that the LXX. so takes it, partly because a cognate Arabic word has that meaning. There seems no reason, however, for disturbing the A. V., which rests on the meaning of the word in Jer. ii. 22, and is supported by the Vulg. and most recent commentators.

The verb rendered "taketh away" may have the sense (as in Ezek. xvi. 11) of "adorning one's-self." Assuming this as an alternative rendering, and taking the word "garment" as meaning fine, as distinct from warm clothing, we get, perhaps, a more apposite illustration. To put on such a garment in time of cold is unseasonable, so is the singing to a heavy heart.

21, 22. The precept here has the special interest of having been reproduced by St Paul (Rom. xii. 20). But it has also a special difficulty. While the first clause rises to the level of the teaching which bids us "love our enemies and do good to them that hate us;" the second seems at first sight to suggest a motive incompatible with a true charity. We are told to feed our enemy when he is hungry, because in so doing we shall "heap coals of fire on his head," *i.e.* in order to inflict on him the sharpest pain, or even draw down on him the divine judgment (comp. "coals of fire" in Ps. cxl. 10). Benevolence in such a case seems only a far-sighted calculating malignity. The explanation given by many commentators, and in part adopted by Augustine ('De doctr. Christ.' III. 16), that the sense of shame will make the recipient of undeserved and unexpected bounty glow with blushes till his face is like the red-hot charcoal, and his heart is hot as with the burning and passionate complaints of penitence, though it avoids the ethical difficulty, is hardly satisfactory. The use made of the words "coals of fire" in Lev. xvi. 12 seems to the present writer to suggest a better interpretation. The High-priest on the day of Atonement was to take his censer, to fill it with "coals of fire," and then to put the incense thereon for a sweet-smelling savour.

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

23 [g] The north wind driveth away rain: so *doth* an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

24 [h] *It is* better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

25 *As* cold waters to a thirsty soul, so *is* good news from a far country.

26 A righteous man falling down before the wicked *is as* a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

27 *It is* not good to eat much honey: so *for men* to search their own glory *is not* glory.

28 [i] He that *hath* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city *that is* broken down, *and* without walls.

[g] Or, *The north wind bringeth forth rain: so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.*
[h] chap. 19. 13. & 21. 9.
[i] chap. 16. 32.

So it is here. The first emotion caused by the good we do may be one of burning shame, but the shame will do its work and the heart also will burn, and prayer and confession and thanksgiving will rise as incense to the throne of God. Thus, as in the words which St Paul adds to the proverb, "we shall overcome evil with good."

23. The A. V. follows the Vulgate, but the marginal reading, **bringeth forth rain**, is far more accurate and gives a better sense; "so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance." On the other hand, there is the fact that the north is elsewhere connected, not with rain, but with fine weather (Job. xxxvii. 22). It is probable enough, however, that the same quarter of the wind might at one season of the year bring clouds and rain, and at another clear the sky; or that there might be different phenomena on opposite sides of the same mountain-range. The N. W. wind in Palestine commonly brings rain, and this was probably in the thought of the writer. Other ancient versions, the LXX., Aquila, and Chaldee, and most modern commentators, support the rendering given above.

24. Comp. Note on xxi. 19.

25. The words remind us of the scanty intercourse in the old world between wanderers and the home they had left. The craving for tidings in such a case might be as a consuming thirst, the news that quenched it as a refreshing fountain.

26. *falling down before*] sc. yielding and cringing. To see this, where we expected to see stedfastness, is as grievous as for the traveller to find the spring at which he hoped to quench his thirst turbid and defiled.

27. The first clause repeats the warning of *v.* 16 against excess in anything, however pleasant. The second is more difficult and the text is probably defective. The A. V. gets a meaning by inserting a negative which is not in the original. The following rendering, adopted by many commentators, gives the nearest approach to the original: **so to search into weighty matters is itself a weight**, *i.e.* men soon become satiated with it as with honey. See Note below.

NOTE on CHAP. XXV. 27.

There is, however, in the original a *paronomasia*, which it is not easy to reproduce in a translation. The same root (כבד = to be heavy) branches out into the two meanings, "burden" and "glory." And so we get the sharp sarcasm, that what is weighty in the one sense will be found weighty also in the other. Other renderings (some involving a various reading) are, (1) "to despise honour is honour" (Ewald); (2) "to despise honour is above honour" (Hitzig); (3) "to seek honour is without honour" (Gesenius). That given above is supported by Luther ("wer schwere Dinge forschet, dem wirds zu schwer"), Rosenmüller, and Bertheau. The latter, dwelling on the special force of the word "search" in Job ix. 10, xi. 7; Isai. xl. 28, as applied to the deep things of God, takes the proverb as a warning against an over-curious searching into the mysteries of God's word or works. The Vulg. "scrutator majestatis opprimetur a gloriâ" seems to imply such an interpretation.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *Observations about fools,* 13 *about sluggards,* 17 *and about contentious busybodies.*

AS snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool.

CHAP. XXVI. 1. Commonly in Palestine from the early showers of spring to October there is hardly any rain. For this reason "rain in harvest" became sometimes, as in

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

[a] Ps. 32. 9. chap. 10. 13.

3 [a] A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in † his own conceit.

† Heb. *his own eyes.*

6 He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, *and* drinketh ‖ damage.

‖ Or, *violence.*

7 The legs of the lame † are not equal: so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

† Heb. *are lifted up.*

8 ‖ As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so *is* he that giveth honour to a fool.

‖ Or, *As he that putteth a* precious *stone in an heap of stones.*

9 *As* a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

10 ‖ The great *God* that formed all *things* both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

‖ Or, *A great* man *grieveth all, and he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressors.*

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1 S. xii. 17, a supernatural sign, sometimes, as in this place, a proverb for whatever is strange and incongruous.

2. The A.V. follows the Hebrew text, and the *consensus* of most interpreters gives the same meaning. "Vague as the flight of the sparrow, aimless as the wheelings of the swallow, is the causeless curse. It will never reach its goal." The marginal reading in the Hebrew, however, gives a different and perhaps better sense. "The causeless curse, though it may pass out of our ken, like a bird's track in the air, will come on him, sc. on the man who utters it." Thus taken, we have an exact parallel to the English proverb, "Curses, like young chickens, always come home to roost." The fact that there was in later times a Hebrew proverb expressing exactly the same truth ("a causeless curse falls on the head of the curser"), but without the comparison, confirms the view which is here taken. (Buxtorf, 'Florileg. Hebr.' p. 184.) See Note below.

4 and 5. Two sides of a truth are set forth in the form of a paradox, so easy and simple as hardly to require explanation. To "answer a fool according to his folly" in *v.* 4 is to bandy words with him, to descend to his level of coarse anger and vile abuse, and in *v.* 5 it is to say the right word at the right time, to expose his unwisdom and untruth to others, and even, if it may be, to himself. This is best done, not by a teaching beyond his reach, but by words that he is just able to apprehend. So taken, the maxim stands parallel to that of Matt. vii. 6, "Neither cast ye your pearls before swine." It is worthy of note (1) that the apparent contradiction between the two verses led some of the Rabbis to question the canonical authority of the book, and (2) that the Pythagoreans had maxims like in form. "Walk," and "walk not ... in the broad road," in which a truth was expressed in precepts seemingly contradictory.

6. *cutteth off the feet*] sc. mutilates him, makes him powerless, spoils the work which the messenger ought to fulfil.

drinketh damage] sc., as in Job. xv. 16, "has to drink full draughts of shame and loss."

7. The words admit of various renderings. It is best, perhaps (with the LXX.), to take the sentence as imperative, **Take away the legs of the lame man, and the parable that is in the mouth of fools.** Both are alike useless to their possessors. Keeping the indicative we get, according to the meaning given to the verb, either (1) "The legs of the lame man are feeble, so is a parable in the mouth of fools;" or (2) "The lifting up of the legs of a lame man, sc. his attempts at dancing, are as the parable in the mouth of fools." (Rosenmüller, following Luther.)

8. The A.V. follows the LXX., and gives an adequate meaning: "To give honour to the fool is like binding a stone in a sling, so that you cannot throw it." In each case you misapply and so waste.

We give a sharper point to the epigram (though with some straining of the word) by taking "stone" as meaning "gem." To use a precious stone where a pebble would be sufficient is not less foolish than to give honour to a fool. See Note below.

9. *goeth up*] Better, "as a thorn which **is lifted up** in the hand of the drunkard." As such a weapon so used may do mischief to the man himself or to others, so may the sharp, keen-edged proverb when used by one who does not understand it.

10. The rendering in the text rests on a Rabbinic tradition, but cannot be maintained. The italics shew that the word "God" is not in the original, and the adjective translated "great" is never used elsewhere absolutely in that sense.

The words are difficult, and have received many interpretations. The simplest and best is this, **As the archer that woundeth**

11 [b] As a dog returneth to his vomit, *so* a fool [†] returneth to his folly.

12 Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

13 [c] The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion in the way; a lion *is* in the streets.

14 *As* the door turneth upon his hinges, so *doth* the slothful upon his bed.

15 [d] The slothful hideth his hand in *his* bosom; [‖] it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

16 The sluggard *is* wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

17 He that passeth by, *and* [‖] meddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.

18 As a mad *man* who casteth [†] firebrands, arrows, and death,

19 So *is* the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?

20 [†] Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: so [e] where *there is* no [‖] talebearer, the strife [†] ceaseth.

21 [f] *As* coals *are* to burning coals, and wood to fire; so *is* a contentious man to kindle strife.

22 [g] The words of a talebearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the [†] innermost parts of the belly.

23 Burning lips and a wicked heart *are like* a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 He that hateth [‖] dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him;

25 When he [†] speaketh fair, believe him not: for *there are* seven abominations in his heart.

26 *Whose* [‖] hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the *whole* congregation.

27 [h] Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

28 A lying tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

[b] 2 Pet. 2. 22. † Heb. *iterateth his folly.* [c] chap. 22. 13. [d] chap. 19. 24. ‖ Or, *he is weary.* ‖ Or, *is enraged.* † Heb. *flames*, or, *sparks.* † Heb. *Without wood.* [e] chap. 22. 10. ‖ Or, *whisperer.* † Heb. *is silent.* [f] chap. 15. 18. & 29. 22. [g] chap. 18. 8. † Heb. *chambers.* ‖ Or, *is known.* † Heb. *maketh his voice gracious.* ‖ Or, *hatred is covered in secret.* [h] Ps. 7. 15, 16. & 9. 15. Eccles. 10. 8.

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every one, so is he who hireth the fool, and he who hireth every passer-by. This acting at random, entrusting matters of grave moment to men of bad repute, or to any chance-comer, is as likely to do mischief as one who shoots arrows at every one. See Note below.

11. The proverb is reproduced, though not literally, and in combination with one of like character, in 2 Pet. ii. 22.

13. A reproduction almost *verbatim* of xxii. 13. Here, however, there is a greater dramatic vividness in the two words which the slothful man uses in his terror. (1) A roaring one, (2) a lion, more specifically.

15. *it grieveth him*] Better, **it wearieth him.** Comp. xix. 24.

16. *seven men*] The definite number is, as elsewhere (vi. 31, xxiv. 16), used for the indefinite.

reason] Better, **a right judgment.**

17. The Latin proverbial phrase, "auribus lupum tenere," may be noticed for its curious parallelism.

18, 19. The teacher cuts off the plea men are so ready to make for themselves when they have hurt their neighbour by their lies, that they "did not mean mischief," that they were "only in fun." Such jesting is like that of the madman flinging firebrands or arrows.

21. *coals*] Here as elsewhere "charcoal." Comp. the Arabic proverb: "He who puts no wood on the fire stops its burning." (Erpenius, 25.)

22. Comp. note on xviii. 8.

23. *Burning lips*] sc. "glowing with affection, uttering warm words of love," joined with a malignant heart, are like a piece of broken earthenware from the furnace, which glitters with the silver drops that stick to it, but is itself contemptible, worthless.

25. *seven abominations*] Comp. note on *v.* 16. Here there may, perhaps, be a deeper meaning. "Seven" retains its significance as the symbol of completeness. Evil has, as it were, gone through all its work, and holds its accursed Sabbath in the heart in which all things are "very evil."

26. Better, **"Hatred is covered by deceit, but in the midst of the congregation his wickedness will be made manifest,"** sc. then, in the time of need, the feigned friendship will pass into open enmity. The possessive pronoun, which has no antecedent in the verse itself, carries us back to "he that hateth" of *v.* 24.

27. *rolleth a stone*] The first illustration

of a righteous Nemesis is familiar enough (Ps. vii. 15, ix. 15, xxxv. 8; Eccles. x. 8; Ecclus. xxvii. 26, 27). The second refers, probably, to the use made of stones in the rough warfare of an earlier age. Comp. the case of Abimelech, Judg. ix. 53, and the impression it made on the mind of the soldiers of Israel, 2 S. xi. 21. The man is supposed to be rolling the stone up to the heights.

28. The first clause corresponds in its meaning to the maxim "Proprium humani generis est odisse quem læseris" (Tacit. 'Agric.' c. 42). The lying tongue hates its victims.

NOTES on CHAP. XXVI. 2, 8, 10, 28.

2. The sense given by the K'ri, לוֹ for לֹא (though the reading is wanting in many Hebrew MSS.), is implied in the Vulgate, "maledictum frustra prolatum in quempiam superveniet," and in the Arabic. The LXX. recognises the negative. Among modern commentators it has the support of J. D. Michaelis.

8. The rendering "sling" for the Hebrew מרגמה (an ἅπαξ λεγόμενον) has the support of the LXX. (ὃς ἀποδεσμεύει λίθον ἐν σφενδόνῃ). In order to get the notion of incongruity, which is implied in the parallel clause of the proverb, it is necessary either, as above, to take "stone" as meaning "precious stone" (for which there is no adequate authority), or to lay stress upon the folly of "binding" a stone in a sling, and so making both sling and stone useless. The Vulg., representing the Palestine exegesis of the fourth century, gives the strange rendering, "Sicut qui mittit lapidem in acervum Mercurii, ita qui tribuit insipienti honorem;" and, so far as the "acervus" goes, is followed by many commentators (Rosenmüller, Bertheau, Umbreit). Even then, however, there follows a wide diversity of interpretation. The folly of the act is found in flinging precious stones on a roadside heap (Luther, Rosenmüller, Umbreit), or the praise given to a fool is compared to the stone which a man flings at the heap already flung at a criminal who is stoned to death, *i.e.* it does but add to his shame (Gussetius, quoted by Rosenmüller). Hitzig strikes out a path for himself, and gives to מרגמה the sense of the horizontal beam of a pair of scales. He who places a stone on this renders the balance unequal. He who gives praise to a fool in like manner disturbs the balance of a right judgment.

10. The variety of interpretations is so great that we may almost say, *quot homines tot sententiæ*. The more noticeable are as follows:

(1) רב is taken as "powerful," מחולל as "makes to tremble." The mighty man causes terror, so does he who "hires," *i.e.* employs, the fool and the transgressor, in affairs of moment. (Rosenmüller.)

(2) רב is taken as "master, teacher," and the participle as "orders rightly," and the relation between the two clauses is one of contrast. So Luther, "Ein guter Meister machet ein Ding recht, aber wer einen Hümpler dinget, dem wirds verderbet," or, more literally, "A master orders things rightly, but he who employs a fool is as one who employs" either "the passer-by" or the "transgressors," according to the sense given to עברים.

(3) רב is taken as "much," and the verb as "makes" or "produces," and the proverb runs "Much produces all," *i.e.* the rich man becomes richer, but "he who employs a fool..." [as in (2)]. (Hitzig and Umbreit).

(4) רב is taken as "archer" (as in Jer. l. 29; Job xvi. 13), and the participle as "wound" (as in Isai. li. 9), and so we get the rendering given above. (Schultens, Ewald, and Bertheau.)

The difficulty of the verse was clearly felt by both the LXX. and Vulg., which throw no light on the text, and are hopelessly unintelligible.

28. The passage is noteworthy as an instance in which the translators of the A. V. have followed neither the LXX. nor the Vulg., nor even Luther, and have given a better and more pointed meaning. Both the former versions treat the word דכיו as though it were connected with דך = pure, incorrupt. So the LXX. gives γλῶσσα ψευδὴς μισεῖ ἀλήθειαν, the Vulg. "Lingua fallax non amat veritatem." Luther takes the word as active, "Eine falsche Zunge hasset, der ihn strafet," and is followed by Gesenius. The A. V. is supported by most recent commentators.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Observations of selflove,* 5 *of true love,* 11 *of care to avoid offences,* 23 *and of the household care.*

[a] BOAST not thyself of [†] to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

[a] James 4. 13, &c. [†] Heb. *to morrow day.*

CHAP. XXVII. 1. The warning has many echoes both in the teaching of Scripture (Luke xii. 20; James iv. 13—16) and in that of other nations. The Latin proverb, "Nescio quid serus vesper vehat," is worth notice, as presenting it in an intensified form.

2 Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

3 A stone *is* † heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both.

4 † Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but who *is* able to stand before ‖ envy?

5 Open rebuke *is* better than secret love.

6 *b* Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* ‖ deceitful.

7 The full soul † loatheth an honeycomb; but *c* to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

8 As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so *is* a man that wandereth from his place.

9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend † by hearty counsel.

10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: *for* *d* better *is* a neighbour *that is* near than a brother far off.

11 *e* My son, be wise, and make

† Heb. *heaviness.*
† Heb. *Wrath is cruelty, and anger an overflowing.*
‖ Or, *jealousy?*
b Ps. 141. 5.
‖ Or, *earnest,* or, *frequent.*
† Heb. *treadeth under foot.*
c Job 6. 7.
† Heb. *from the counsel of the soul.*
d chap. 17. 17. & 18. 24.
e chap. 10. 1. & 23. 24.

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2. *another*] The original word carries with it the force (like "stranger" in the parallel clause) of "*alienus*" rather than "*alius*." The praise to be worth anything must be altogether independent.

3. Comp. Ecclus. xxii. 15, as drawing a like comparison between the heaviest material burdens and the more intolerable load of violent, unreasoning passion.

4. *envy*] Better, **jealousy**: what is described is the violence of passion in the husband who thinks himself wronged, as in vi. 34, not the slower, corroding vexation of one who is envious of another's prosperity.

5. The duty of friends to speak faithful words of rebuke when rebuke is needed has become the common inheritance of all moralists. "Sic habendum est, nullam in amicitiis pestem esse majorem, quam adulationem, blanditiam, assentationem." Cic. 'De Amic.' c. 25. "Non amo illum (sc. amicum), nisi offendo." Senec. 'Ep.' 25.

"Sed tu ex amicis certis mihi est certissimus,
Si quid scis me fecisse inscite aut improbe,
Si id me non accusas, tute ipse objurgandus es."
Plaut. 'Trinumm.' I. 2, 57.

secret love] Better, **love that is hidden**; sc. that which, never shewing itself in this one way of rebuking faults, is really hiding itself when its presence is most needed, and must be treated therefore as non-existent. Rebuke, whether from friend or foe, is better than such love.

6. The word rendered "deceitful" is, as the marginal readings shew, of doubtful meaning. Authority predominates in favour of **abundant**, and we thus get a delicate touch of irony, which is wanting in the A.V. Very lavish is the enemy of the kisses that cover perfidy, but lavish of them only. His courtesy goes no deeper. Comp. Note below.

7. The special instance covers, of course, the general law that indulgence in pleasure of any kind brings on satiety and weariness, that self-restraint multiplies the sources of enjoyment.

8. Change of place is thought of as in itself an evil. It is not easy for the man to find another home or the bird another nest. The sense of security is lost and cannot easily be regained. The maxim, it may be noticed, is characteristic of the earlier stages of Hebrew history, before exile and travel had made change of country a more familiar thing. We seem to hear an echo of the feeling which made the thought of being "a fugitive and a vagabond" (Gen. iv. 12, 13) the most terrible of all punishments.

10. There are times when we get from a friend the sympathy which a kinsman refuses to us. Comp. xvii. 17, xviii. 24. "Enter not," sc. "thou wilt do well not to enter......" "Better is a neighbour" who is really "near," sc. in heart and spirit, than a brother who though closer locally, or, which is worse, by blood, is "far off" in feeling. Compare the following passage from Hesiod, 'Works and Days,' v. 341:

Τὸν δὲ μάλιστα καλεῖν, ὅς τις σέθεν ἐγγύθι ναίει·
Εἰ γάρ τοι καὶ χρῆμ' ἐγχώριον ἄλλο γένηται,
Γείτονες ἄζωστοι ἔκιον, ζώσαντο δὲ πηοί.

"Chiefly bid to thy feast the friend that dwelleth hard by thee:
For should there chance to come a matter that toucheth the village,
Neighbours will come in haste, while kinsmen leisurely gird them."

11. *My son*] The main thought is that the virtues of the son are an answer to those who charge the father with neglect, or vice. But the frequent use of the words in the earlier chapters (i.—ix.) ought to teach us that here also we hear the voice of the teacher to his true disciple. He pleads with him in an appeal to which no generous nature

my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.

[f] chap. 22. 3.

12 [f]A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, *and* hideth himself; *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished.

[g] chap. 20. 16.

13 [g]Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

14 He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

[h] chap. 19. 13.

15 [h]A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

16 Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, *which* bewrayeth *itself*.

17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

18 Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.

19 As in water face *answereth* to face, so the heart of man to man.

20 Hell and destruction are [1]never full; so [i]the eyes of man are never satisfied.

[1] Heb. *not*.

[i] Eccles. 1. 8.

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is insensible, entreating him to let his life testify to the teaching of his master. The uprightness of the scholar will be the truest answer to all attacks on the character or teaching of the master.

12. Identical with xxii. 3.

13. Comp. xx. 16. Here we have in the text itself the reading "strange woman," which there the A.V. borrows from the marginal correction of the Hebrew.

14. The picture drawn is that of the ostentatious flatterer going at daybreak to pour out blessings on his patron. For any good that he does, for any thanks he gets, he might as well utter curses. The phrase, "rising early in the morning," may point either to a custom of paying morning visits of respect, like that which prevailed at Rome, or to something at variance with custom, and therefore startling; or may be used as simply implying zeal, eagerness, impetuosity.

15. *continual dropping*] Here, as in xix. 13, the flat earthen roof of eastern houses, always liable to cracks and leakage, supplies the ground-work of the similitude.

16. The point in both similitudes is the impossibility (according to the meaning given to the Hebrew verb in the second clause) of concealment or restraint. A man cannot hide the wind, or clasp it in his hands. If he takes an unguent in his right hand, the odour betrays him, or it slips out. So in like manner, the "contentious woman" is one whose faults it is impossible either to hide or check. See Note below. The difficulty of the proverb seems to have led the LXX. translators to a different reading, "The north wind is rough, and yet it is called propitious," which is adopted also by the Arabic, Chaldee, and Syriac versions. So taken, it presents a curious parallel to our homely saying, "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good." Even the north, with all its roughness, clears off the clouds and brings fine weather.

17. *sharpeneth*] The proverb, as commonly understood, expresses the gain of mutual counsel as found in clear, well-defined thoughts. Two minds, thus acting on each other, become more acute. Another, but less satisfactory interpretation (supported by an Arabic proverb, and adopted by Rosenmüller and Bertheau) sees in "sharpening" the idea of provoking, irritating, and finds the point of the maxim in the fact that the quarrels of those who have been friends are bitter in proportion to their previous intimacy.

18. *waiteth*] Literally, "keepeth," "observeth." Like in meaning to the proverb quoted by St Paul (2 Tim. ii. 6), but with a special reference to the attendance of slaves on their master. As the fig-tree requires constant care but yields abundant crops, so the ministrations of a faithful servant will not be without their due reward.

19. Here the simplest and most natural meaning is also the truest. As we see our own face when we look on the mirror-like surface of the water, so in every heart of man we may see our own likeness. In spite of all diversities we come upon the common human nature in which we all alike share. The condensation of the proverb, however, makes another interpretation possible, and so many have seen in the reference to the reflection in the water the thought that we judge of others by ourselves, find them faithful or the reverse, as we ourselves are. The LXX. (assuming a different reading) translates, or rather paraphrases it, as though the fact which it expressed were the differences of human characters, "As one face is not like another, so neither are the hearts of men."

20. Hades, the world of the dead, and Destruction (Death, the destroying power, personified) have been at all times and in all

ch. 17. 21 [k] *As* the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so *is* a man to his praise.

22 Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him.

23 Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, *and* † look well to thy herds.

† Heb. *set thy heart.*

24 For † riches *are* not for ever: and doth the crown *endure* † to every generation?

† Heb. *strength.*

† Heb. *to generation and generation?*

25 The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

26 The lambs *are* for thy clothing, and the goats *are* the price of the field.

27 And *thou shalt have* goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and *for* the † maintenance for thy maidens.

† Heb. *life.*

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countries thought of as all-devouring, insatiable (comp. xxx. 16). Yet one thing, the teacher tells us, is more so, the lust of the eye, the restless craving which grows with what it feeds on (Eccles. i. 8).

21. It is better to take the sense as imperative, **So let a man be to his praise**, let him purify it from all the alloy of flattery and baseness with which it is too probably mixed up. So Gesenius, Winer, De Wette, Umbreit. The A.V. suggests the meaning (in itself quite tenable) that praise itself acts as does a furnace upon metal, and tries the man of what sort he is.

22. *bray*] sc. to pound wheat in a mortar with a pestle, is to go through the most elaborate process, far more than threshing, for freeing the wheat from its husk and impurities. But the folly of the fool is not thus to be got rid of. It sticks to him to the last; all discipline, teaching, experience seem to be wasted on him. There is no reason for supposing any reference to the punishment of pounding a criminal to death. Such a mode of torture has been met with in modern times in the East, but there are no traces of it in Jewish history.

23—27. The verses are closely connected and form one continuous counsel. Taken literally they sing the praises of the earlier patriarchal life, with its flocks and herds, and tillage of the ground, as compared with the commerce of a later time, with money as its chief or only wealth.

23. *know the state of thy flocks*] Better, **face**, and so supplying an illustration of John x. 3, 14.

24. *For riches*] The money which men may steal, or waste, as contrasted with the land of which the owner is not so easily deprived.

are not for ever] Nor will the crown (the word is used of the "crown of pure gold" worn on the mitre of the High-priest (Exod. xxix. 6, xxxix. 30), and of kingly diadem, and so becomes the symbol of power generally) be transmitted (as flocks and herds had been) "from one generation to another."

25. *appeareth*] Better, **When the grass disappeareth**, the tender grass sheweth itself." Stress is laid on the regular succession of the products of the earth. The "grass" of the first clause is that which in Pss. xxxvii. 2, xc. 5, ciii. 15; 2 K. xix. 26 is used as the proverbial type of what is perishable and fleeting. The verse gives a picture of the pleasantness of the husbandman's calling. We are reminded of the "Beatus ille qui procul negotiis" of Horace, 'Epod.' II. 1. The teacher seems to say, "These are the delights of the shepherd's life, and compared with these what can wealth or rank offer?" With this there mingles, in connection with *v.* 23, the thought that each stage of that life in its season requires care and watchfulness.

NOTES on CHAP. XXVII. 6, 16.

6. The difficulty lies in the word נעתרות. As derived from the Niphal of עתר, "to pray," it has been taken either in the sense of "things to be prayed against," or "things prayed for," and that either as meaning "lavish and abundant," or "constrained, unreal," as in our use of the word "precarious." Others connect it with an Arabic root, which conveys the idea of "stumbling," and so (following the Vulg. "fraudulenta") render the word, as the antithesis of "faithful" in the first clause of the verse, "deceitful," as in the A.V. So Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Ewald. The rendering given above is supported by Gesenius, Winer, De Wette, Umbreit, Maurer, and (though on the ground of a different derivation) Bertheau.

16. The point at issue is whether the verb יִקְרָא, of which "the ointment of his right hand" is the subject, is taken as coming from קָרָא in its usual sense of "call out," "proclaim," and so "bewray," or as identical in meaning with קָרָה, "happen," "befall." With

the latter meaning we get (1) "his right hand meets with oil," or (2) "oil meets his right hand," sc. slips out from it. The A.V., which takes the former sense, is supported by Rosenmüller. Ewald, Bertheau, Hitzig, with some differences of construction, adopt the latter. Maurer gives the somewhat eccentric rendering "his right hand calls for ointment," sc. will be so torn by the contentious woman as to require a plaister.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

General observations of impiety and religious integrity.

THE [a] wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

2 For the transgression of a land many *are* the princes thereof: but [‖] by a man of understanding *and* knowledge the state *thereof* shall be prolonged.

3 A poor man that oppresseth the poor *is like* a sweeping rain [†] which leaveth no food.

4 They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.

5 Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.

6 [b] Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

7 [c] Whoso keepeth the law *is* a wise son: but he that [‖] is a companion of riotous *men* shameth his father.

8 [d] He that by usury and [†] unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

9 He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

10 [e] Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good *things* in possession.

[a] Lev. 26. 36.
‖ Or, *by men of understanding* and *wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged.*
† Heb. *without food.*
[b] chap. 19. 1.
[c] chap. 29. 3.
‖ Or, *feedeth gluttons.*
[d] chap. 13. 22. Eccles. 2. 26.
† Heb. *by increase.*
[e] chap. 26. 27.

CHAP. XXVIII. 2. *transgression*] Better, perhaps, **rebellion.** (So Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Maurer.) A revolt against a ruler leads to rapid changes of dynasty (comp. the whole history of the kingdom of Israel as a proof of this), but "with men of understanding and knowledge thus shall he (the prince) continue." True wisdom will lead men to maintain an existing order. The A.V., however, is in harmony with the general meaning of the word, and implies, what is in itself true, that political disorders may come as the punishment of any national sin, idolatry, luxury, or the like.

the state thereof] The A.V. takes the כֵּן, usually the adverb of comparison, as a noun, and makes it the subject of the verb (so Rosenmüller). It is better, perhaps, to take it as a qualifying adverb, **it** (sc. the land) **shall surely prolong its days in stability.**

3. Another political maxim. Men raise a man of the people, poor like themselves, to power. They find him the worst oppressor of all, plundering them even to their last morsels, like the storm-rain which sweeps off the seed-corn instead of bringing fertility.

5. Asserts the deep inter-dependence of morality and intellect. We lose ethical discernment in proportion as we do evil. We have a right judgment in all things in proportion as our heart seeks to know God. Comp. James i. 23, 24.

6. *perverse in his ways*] The Hebrew significantly uses the dual, not the plural, "perverse in his *double* ways." Comp. Ecclus. ii. 12, and St James's reference to the "double-minded man," James i. 8.

8. *unjust gain*] The Hebrew word does not in itself imply injustice: "usury and gain" make up the notion of "gain derived from usury." The law of God's government is that ill-gotten gains do not prosper, that after a time they pass into hands that know how to use them better.

10. No form of evil is more hateful, no result of evil sadder, than the temptation by the wicked of those who have been righteous. Vice in such a case seems to win a two-fold triumph. It gains its own ends and exults in the downfall of the good. But here also the triumph is suicidal. In any case the tempter will suffer the punishment he deserves, and the blameless, if true to themselves, will be strengthened and ennobled by the temptation.

11 The rich man *is* wise [1] in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

12 [f] When righteous *men* do rejoice, *there is* great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is [1] hidden.

13 [g] He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

14 Happy *is* the man that feareth alway: [h] but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

15 *As* a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; *so is* a wicked ruler over the poor people.

16 The prince that wanteth understanding *is* also a great oppressor: *but* he that hateth covetousness shall prolong *his* days.

17 [i] A man that doeth violence to the blood of *any* person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

18 [k] Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but *he that is* perverse *in his* ways shall fall at once.

19 [l] He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain *persons* shall have poverty enough.

20 A faithful man shall abound with blessings: [m] but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be [1] innocent.

21 [n] To have respect of persons *is* not good: for for a piece of bread *that* man will transgress.

[Margin: ...eb. ...his eyes. — ...ap. 11. ...28. ...les. 10. — ...r. ...ht for. ...32. 5. ...hn 1. 9. — Rom. 11. — i Gen. 9. 6. Exod. 21. 14. — k chap. 10. 25. — l chap. 12. 11. — m chap. 13. 11. & 23. 4. 1 Tim. 6. 9. — 1 Or, *unpunished*. — n chap. 18. 5. & 24. 23.]

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11. The epigrammatic point of the proverb is keen and sharp. The rich man sees in the riches he has gained a proof of his wisdom, but all the while his poorer neighbour sees him through and through. Wealth blunts, poverty sharpens, the critical power of intellect.

12. The sense of the whole is clear, but that of single words doubtful;

there is great glory] sc. men array themselves in festive apparel, shew their joy conspicuously, have no need to hide it.

a man is hidden] Better, **men hide themselves**, sc. shrink and cower for fear, and yet are hunted out.

13. If wrong has been done, the course which man is naturally tempted to take, that of hiding, hushing up, does but increase his misery. The burden is still on him. The conditions of freedom are confession and amendment, confession to God of sins against Him, to men of sins against them. The teaching of ethical wisdom on this point is identical with that of Psalmist, Prophet, Apostles, and our Lord Himself.

14. The "fear" here spoken of is expressed by a different word from that used in this book to express "the fear of the Lord," and denotes, not so much reverential awe, as anxious, or, as we should say, "nervous" sensitiveness of conscience. The teaching takes, as often elsewhere, the form of paradox. To most men this temperament seems that of the self-tormenter. To him who looks deeper it is a condition of blessedness, and the callousness which is opposed to it ends in misery.

15. The form of political wretchedness, when the poverty of the oppressed subjects not only embitters their sufferings, but exasperates the brutal ferocity of the ruler.

16. The kingcraft which shews itself in oppression has its root in unwisdom; misrule is *ipso facto* a proof of want of understanding in the ruler.

17. The case supposed is, of course, that of wilful murder, not the lesser crime of manslaughter for which the cities of refuge were appointed. One who seeks to flee, with that guilt on his soul, is simply hasting on to his own destruction. Those who see him must simply stand aloof, and let God's judgments fulfil themselves.

18. *perverse in his ways*] Rather "in his double ways" (as in *v.* 6). What is spoken of is the evil of vacillation, rather than that of craft; but as vacillation itself rises out of want of the one guiding principle of right, it is contrasted with the straightforwardness of the man that "walketh uprightly."

shall fall at once] Better, **shall fall in one of them**. The attempt to combine incompatibilities is sure to fail. We cannot serve God and Mammon.

20. Not the possession of wealth, nor even the acquisition of it, is evil, but the eager haste of covetousness.

"Quæ reverentia legum,
Quis metus aut pudor est unquam properantis avari?"—Juven. 'Sat.' XIV. 177.

shall not be innocent] Better, as in the margin, **shall not be unpunished**, in contrast with the many "blessings" that attend the course of the "faithful."

21. What is dwelt on chiefly is the habit of dishonest partiality, which leads men who have enslaved themselves to it to transgress,

† Or, *He that hath an evil eye hasteth to be rich*, ver. 20.

22 † He that hasteth to be rich *hath* an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

° chap. 27. 6.

23 ° He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

24 Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, *It is* no transgression; the same *is* the companion of † a destroyer.

† Heb. *a man destroying*.

25 *p* He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

p chap. 13. 10.

26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

27 *q* He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

q Deut. 15. 7, &c. chap. 22. 9.

28 *r* When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.

r ver. 12. chap. 29. 2.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 Observations of publick government, 15 and of private. 22 Of anger, pride, thievery, cowardice, and corruption.

† HE, that being often reproved hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

† Heb. *A man of reproofs*.

2 *a* When the righteous are † in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

a chap. 11. 10. & 28. 12. Eccles. 10. 5. † Or, *increase*.

3 *b* Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: *c* but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth *his* substance.

b chap. 10. 1. & 15. 20. *c* chap. 5. 9. & 6. 26. Luke 15. 13.

4 The king by judgment establisheth the land: but † he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

† Heb. *a man of oblations*.

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even when the inducement is altogether disproportionate. The "piece of bread," proverbial at all times as the extremest point of poverty (Prov. vi. 26; 1 S. ii. 36; Ezek. xiii. 19), finds in this connection a singular parallel in the words of Cato as to the dishonesty of M. Cælius: "Frusto panis conduci potest, vel uti sileat, vel uti loquatur." Aul. Gell. 'Noct. Att.' I. 15. It is better, with the A. V. (though the Hebrew has no demonstrative pronoun), to refer the second clause to the same person as the first, and so to find in it an instance of the "facilis descensus" of the sin which the teacher reproves. Omitting the pronoun, the maxim states a common fact somewhat too generally.

22. Another aspect of the covetous temper. It leads not only to dishonesty, but to the "evil eye" of envy; and the man, envying the gains of others, does not see that that very temper of grudging, carking care, is leading him to poverty. The reading of the text is preferable to that of the margin.

24. *is the companion of a destroyer*] sc. stands on the same footing as the open, lawless robber. It is interesting to think of this in connection with our Lord's teaching as to the Corban. The casuistry of the later Scribes, it would seem, had found out a way, by which, even with this warning before him, a man might "rob his father or his mother," and say not only that it was "no transgression," but that it was a holy and righteous act.

25. *shall be made fat*] sc., as in xi. 25, shall enjoy the two-fold blessing of abundance and tranquillity.

26. The word "trust" in the preceding verse suggests the contrast between the wisdom of him who trusts in the Lord, and the folly of self-trust, and so serves as a connecting link.

27. *hideth his eyes*] As in Isai. i. 15, for turning away from, disregarding, refusing.

CHAP. XXIX. **1.** *He, that being often reproved*] Literally, as in the marginal reading, "a man of reproofs."

shall be destroyed] Lit., as in vi. 15, "shall be broken." Stress is laid on the suddenness in such a case of the long-delayed retribution.

2. *when the wicked beareth rule*] The noun, though in the singular, is used generically, and thus corresponds to "the righteous" of the first clause.

3. There is a slight shade of irony in the second clause. The laws of parallelism would lead us to expect "troubleth his father's soul," but, instead of it, that is taken for granted, or passed over as a thing about which the profligate would not care, and he is reminded of what comes home to him, the truth against which even he cannot close his eyes, that he is on the road to ruin.

4. *The king*] The ruler is thought of as the supreme fountain of all justice, himself personally judging, and as the ideal judge, contrasted with the taker of bribes.

5 A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.

6 In the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.

7 [d] The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it*.

8 Scornful men [1] bring a city into a snare: but wise *men* turn away wrath.

9 *If* a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no rest.

10 [†] The bloodthirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.

11 A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

12 If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants *are* wicked.

13 [e] The poor and [1] the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.

14 [f] The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

15 [g] The rod and reproof give wisdom: but [h] a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.

16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: [i] but the righteous shall see their fall.

17 [k] Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

18 Where *there is* no vision, the

[d] Job 29. 16.
[1] Or, *set a city on fire.*
[†] Heb. *Men of blood.*
[e] chap. 22. 2.
[1] Or, *the usurer.*
[f] chap. 20. 28.
[g] ver. 17.
[h] chap. 10. 1. & 17. 21, 25.
[i] Ps. 37. 36. & 58. 10. & 91. 8.
[k] chap. 13. 24. & 22. 15. & 23. 13, 14.

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he that receiveth gifts] Literally, "a man of gifts, or offerings." Comp. "man of reproofs" in *v.* 1.

6. The thought seems to be that while the offence of the wicked, rising out of a confirmed habit of evil, becomes a snare for his destruction; the righteous, even if he offend, is forgiven and can still rejoice in his freedom from condemnation. This interpretation assumes that the opening words "In the offence" apply both to the evil man and to the righteous. If, with Rosenmüller, we look at the second clause as entirely contrasted with the first, it expresses the joy of one whose conscience is void of offence, and who is in no danger of falling into the snare.

8. *Scornful men*] Here, the men who head political or religious revolutions, who inflame (**set on fire**, as in the margin, or, more strictly, fan into a flame; comp. Ezek. xxi. 31; Job xli. 20) the minds of the people against the powers that be.

9. All modes of teaching are alike useless for the man who has lost all receptivity for wisdom. You may rebuke him sternly, or speak smilingly, still there is "no rest." The ceaseless cavilling goes on still.

10. *seek his soul*] The phrase is commonly used, as in 1 S. xx. 1; 2 S. iv. 8; Ps. liv. 3, of hostile designs against life. Here, however, as in the analogous combination in Ps. cxlii. 4, it appears to be taken in a good sense. "The just seek, *i.e.* care for, watch over, his life." So Rosenmüller, Bertheau, Fürst, Ewald.

11. *all his mind*] The Hebrew word is that commonly rendered "spirit," and used sometimes for "mind" or "reason," sometimes, as in Job xv. 13; Eccles. x. 4; Zech. vi. 8, for "passion," or "wrath." Either meaning fits in here, but the reticence which the proverb commends is probably meant to include both. The verb "keepeth it in," elsewhere (as in Ps. lxv. 7) rendered "it stilleth," is, perhaps, slightly in favour of the second of the two senses.

12. *all his servants are wicked*] They know what will please, become informers and backbiters. Every deviation from truth on the part of the ruler is multiplied tenfold in his ministers.

13. Better, The poor and the **oppressor**. "Usurer," as in the margin, expresses the special form of oppression from which the poor suffer most at the hands of the rich. The teaching is the same as that of xxii. 2. Men at the opposite extremes of life stand so far on the same footing. God has made them both and bestows His light equally on both, makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good.

15. *left to himself*] The words describe the condition not of the orphan or deserted child, but of one who has been pampered and indulged. The mother who thus yields weakly to what is really a self-indulgence, is as guilty of abandoning the child she spoils, as if she cast him forth; and inasmuch as evil neglect no less than evil act works out its own punishment, there shall fall upon her the righteous punishment of shame and ignominy.

16. *shall see their fall*] Better, **shall look upon**. This combination in the Hebrew of the verb with a preposition implies looking on with satisfaction.

18. *Where there is no vision*] The word is that commonly used of the revelation of

people [1]perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.

19 A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.

20 Seest thou a man *that is* hasty [1]in his words? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

21 He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become *his* son at the length.

22 [l]An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

23 [m]A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

24 Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth *it* not.

25 The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD [†]shall be safe.

26 [n]Many seek [†]the ruler's favour; but *every* man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.

27 An unjust man *is* an abomination to the just: and *he that is* upright in the way *is* abomination to the wicked.

[1] Or, *is made naked.*

[1] Or, *in his matters?*

[l] chap. 15. 18. & 26. 21.

[m] Job 22. 29. chap. 15. 33. & 18. 12. Matth. 23. 12. Luke 14. 11.

[†] Heb. *shall be set on high.*

[n] chap. 19. 6.

[†] Heb. *the face of a ruler.*

God's will made to prophets. Comp. Isai. i. 1; Nah. i. 1.

perish] The connection between the two clauses is that when prophetic vision fails, obedience to the law is the best or only substitute for it, both being forms through which divine wisdom is revealed. Very striking in the midst of ethical precepts, holy and just and good, yet seeming to reflect chiefly the results of wide experience, and embodying them in rules of conduct, is this recognition of the need of a yet higher teaching, of "the vision and the faculty divine," without which morality passes into worldly prudence or degenerates into casuistry. The "wise man," the son of David, whose wisdom was as the sand upon the sea-shore, has known prophets, and has seen in them and in their work the condition of true national blessedness. The darkest time in the history of Israel had been when there "was no open vision" (1 S. iii. 1), when no man spoke "the word of the Lord," and reminded them of their higher life. There was no greater penalty for gifts misused than that their "prophets" should "be removed into a corner." At such a time the people "perish," more accurately, **are let loose,** "left to run wild."

19. *servant*] *i.e.* a slave, whose obedience is reluctant. If even the son needs the discipline of the scourge, much more will mere words fail to correct the slave, or, we may add, the slave-like temper. He may "understand" the words, but they lie on the surface of his nature and produce no good effect. There is still lacking the true "answer" of obedience.

21. *shall have him become his son*] The Hebrew word occurs here only and is therefore of doubtful meaning, and Ewald on the strength of a supposed Arabic etymology renders it "he, the slave, will become ungrateful." So also Fürst, who renders the word "refractory." The text gives, however, a preferable sense, and is supported by most commentators. The favoured slave, petted and pampered from boyhood, will claim at last the privilege, perhaps the inheritance, of sonship. Luther's rendering, *So will er zuletzt Junker seyn*, is worth quoting for its colloquial point.

23. *honour shall uphold the humble in spirit*] It is better, with most commentators, to invert the order of the subject and object of the verb; **the lowly in spirit shall lay hold on honour.**

24. The explanation of the proverb is found in the Jewish method of dealing with theft. On the first discovery of the fact, the person wronged (as in Judg. xvii. 2), or the judge of the city (as in Lev. v. i.), pronounced a solemn curse alike on the thief himself and on all who, knowing the offender, were unwilling to give evidence against him. The accomplice of the thief hears that curse, and yet is silent, and so falls under it, and "destroys his own soul."

25. The fear of what men can do unto us, with all the confusion and wretchedness in which it entangles us, is contrasted with the serene security of one, who not only "fears" the Lord, so as to avoid offending Him, but trusts in Him as his protector and guide.

26. The complement of the previous verse. To trust in the favour of princes is to build upon the sands. The judgment which will set all wrong right will come, sooner or later, surely if slowly, from the Lord. It is better to wait for that than to run hither and thither, canvassing, bribing, flattering.

27. The words point out not only the antagonism between the doers of good and evil, but the instinctive antipathy, which, even before he can explain it, the one feels towards the other.

CHAPTER XXX.

1 *Agur's confession of his faith.* 7 *The two points of his prayer.* 10 *The meanest are not to be wronged.* 11 *Four wicked generations.* 15 *Four things insatiable.* 17 *Parents are not to be despised.* 18 *Four things hard to be known.* 21 *Four things intolerable.* 24 *Four things exceeding wise.* 29 *Four things stately.* 32 *Wrath is to be prevented.*

THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *even* the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

2 Surely I *am* more brutish than *any* man, and have not the understanding of a man.

3 I neither learned wisdom, nor † have the knowledge of the holy.

4 [a] Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? [b] who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what *is* his name, and what *is* his son's name, if thou canst tell?

5 [c] Every word of God *is* † pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

6 [d] Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

† Heb. *know.*
a John 3. 13.
b Job 38. 4. Ps. 104. 3. Isai. 40. 12.
c Ps. 12. 6. & 18. 30. & 19. 8. & 119. 140.
† Heb. *purified.*
d Deut. 4. 2. & 12. 32. Rev. 22. 18, 19.

CHAP. XXX. 1. For the questions connected with this verse, see the Introduction, p. 518. Here it will be assumed that we meet with a fragment of the teaching of a sage otherwise unknown to us, that it is spoken of as the "prophecy" as having a more poetic, enigmatic character than the rest of the book, and that it is addressed to two real or ideal disciples, whose names may be significant of their characteristic tempers, Ithiel, "With-me-God," of dependence upon God; Ucal, "Strong am I," of self-asserting strength. According to a different reading, however, the inscription ends with, "the man spake," and the words that follow, instead of giving us proper names, are the beginning of the confession, "I have wearied myself after God and have fainted."

spake] The Hebrew word is that commonly used of the utterance of a divine oracle, and is therefore in keeping with the title of "prophecy" as applied to this chapter. Comp. Num. xxiv. 3; Isai. i. 24; Jer. i. 8.

2. The first words of the teacher are a confession of ignorance, which reminds us of the saying of Socrates that he was wise only so far as he knew that he knew nothing (Diog. Laert. II. 5, § 7), or of that of Asaph (Ps. lxxiii. 22) that he had been "foolish and ignorant, as a beast."

3. The point of this addition to the previous confession lies in its coming from a sage of high repute, to whom men were looking as an oracle. He found, when he looked within, that all his learning was as nothing. He had heard of God only "by the hearing of the ear" (Job xlii. 5), and now he discovered how little that availed.

the holy] The Hebrew is plural here, as in ix. 10, but is used (as Elohim for God) for the Holy One.

4. The parallelism with the teaching of Job continues. Man is to be humbled to the dust by the thought of the glory of God as seen in the visible creation (Job xxxviii.—xli.; Isai. xl. 12).

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?] The thought is obviously that of the all-embracing providence of God, taking in at once the greatest and the least, the highest and the lowest. The mysteries of the winds and of the waters baffle men's researches. Men may use names, like Elohim, Shaddai, Jehovah, but no name can adequately express the glory and greatness of the Infinite and Invisible.

what is his son's name] The primary thought, as seen from the writer's point of view, is that man knows so little of the Divine Nature that he cannot tell whether he may transfer to it the human relationships with which he is familiar, or must rest in the thought of a unity indivisible and incommunicable. If there be such an Only-begotten of the Father (and the language of viii. 30 makes it possible that the thought had at least been in part revealed to the mind of the Eastern sage), His nature, until revealed, must be as incomprehensible by us as that of the Father Himself.

5. Out of this consciousness of the impotence of all man's efforts after the knowledge of God rises the sense of the preciousness of every living word that God has Himself revealed, whether through "the Law and the Prophets" or through "wise men and scribes." Assuming what has been suggested as to the speaker of these words, we may see in them an acceptance of the higher truth, which had been revealed to Israel, by one who, like the Queen of the South, came from the uttermost part of the earth to hear a wisdom greater than his own.

6. The preciousness of truth thus revealed, wherever it is bestowed, should restrain men from mingling with it their own imaginations and traditions. In speculating on the unseen,

7 Two *things* have I required of thee; [†]deny me *them* not before I die:

8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; [e]feed me with food [†]convenient for me:

9 [f]Lest I be full, and [†]deny *thee*, and say, Who *is* the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

10 [†]Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

11 *There is* a generation *that* curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

12 *There is* a generation *that are* pure in their own eyes, and *yet* is not washed from their filthiness.

13 *There is* a generation, O how [g]lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

14 [h]*There is* a generation, whose teeth *are as* swords, and their jaw teeth *as* knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men.

15 The horseleach hath two daugh-

† Heb. *withhold not from me.*
e Matth. 6. 11.
† Heb. *of my allowance.*
f Deut. 32. 15.
† Heb. *belie thee.*
† Heb. *Hurt not with thy tongue.*
g chap. 6. 17.
h Job 29. 17. Ps. 52. 2. & 57. 4.

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constructing to ourselves systems, physical or ethical, of the universe, the risk of error is indefinitely great, and that error God reproves by manifesting its falsehoods.

7. The teacher appears to be answering a new question, teaching his disciples what to pray for. What follows is, however, in harmony with what precedes. The limitation of man's desires follows naturally upon his consciousness of the limits of his knowledge.

8. The order of the two requests is significant. The wise man's prayer is not merely like that of an Epicurean asking for a quiet life, between the two extremes of wealth and poverty, but first and chiefly, "truth in the inward parts," the removal of all forms of falsehood, hollowness, hypocrisy. The evil of the opposite extremes of social life is that in different ways they lead men to a false standard of duty, and so to that forgetfulness of God which passes into an absolute denial.

food convenient for me] Literally, "give me for food the bread of my appointed portion." The prayer of the Wise Man foreshadows that which we have been taught by the Divine Wisdom, and in which we pray "Give us, day by day, our daily bread."

9. There is a profound insight into the depth of man's nature in this specification of the special dangers of the two extremes. Wealth tempts to pride, unbelief, a scorn like that of Pharaoh (Exod. v. 2; comp. Zephan. i. 12); poverty to dishonesty, and then to perjury, or to the hypocritical profession of religion which is practically identical with it. It will be noticed, however, that the words "in vain" are wanting in the Hebrew, and that the verb translated "take" (the word having the sense of "handling as a common thing, and so profaning") may refer to the murmurs of the poor as profaning the Name of God.

10. *Accuse not a servant*] The prayer for freedom from the opposite extremes of fortune does not shut out sympathy with those who are less favoured. Even the slave has a right to protection against frivolous or needless accusation. So in the Egyptian 'Book of Ritual,' c. 125, one who pleads before Osiris as the judge of the dead says in his defence, "I have not slandered a slave to his master." The sense thus given has the support of Rosenmüller and Maurer. Others, however (Bertheau, Hitzig, Ewald), lay stress on the causative force of the Hiphil form of the verb, and render the words **Make not a slave to accuse his master**, *i.e.* Do not make him discontented with his lot, lest he afterwards curse thee for having made it worse than it was. Ewald stands alone in giving a spiritual meaning to the words, seeing in the "servant" the worshipper, and in the "master" Jehovah Himself.

11. Here a new thought begins, but, probably, one which came from the same teacher. As he had uttered what he most desired, so now he tells of what he most abhorred, and in true harmony with the teaching of the Ten Commandments places in the foremost rank those who rise against the Fifth.

12. The Pharisee temper, as in Luke xviii. 11, the same in all ages, and under all degrees of divine knowledge. It is of the essence of this temper that its hypocrisy is unconscious. It is pure "in its own eyes."

13. The abrupt interjectional form, as of one who sees before him that which calls forth his scorn, gives a piquancy to what would otherwise have been simply a physiognomic maxim.

15—17. Here again we have the same form of a numeration mounting to a climax, the two, the three, the four. What is meant by the first clause, as the word rendered "horseleach" is found nowhere else, and its etymology is doubtful, we have no exact means of determining. (See Note below.) Here it will be sufficient to say that there are good grounds for taking the word in its literal

ters, *crying*, Give, give. There are three *things that* are never satisfied, *yea*, four *things* say not, [†]*It is* enough:

Heb. *Wealth.*

16 The grave; and the barren womb; the earth *that* is not filled with water; and the fire *that* saith not, *It is* enough.

17 The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother, the ravens of [‖]the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

Or, *the brook.*

18 There be three *things which* are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not:

19 The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the [†]midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.

Heb. *heart.*

20 Such *is* the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

21 For three *things* the earth is disquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear:

22 [i]For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat;

[i] chap. 19. 10.

23 For an odious *woman* when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

24 There be four *things which are* little upon the earth, but they *are* [†]exceeding wise:

† Heb. *wise, made wise.*

25 [k]The ants *are* a people not

[k] chap. 6. 6.

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sense, as giving an example, in the natural world, of the insatiable greed of which the next verse gives other instances. The tenacity with which the leach fastened itself to the mouths of cattle or the legs of travellers, must have been known to the Israelites and could not fail to become to them, as it did to other nations, a parable of the eager craving which nothing seems to satisfy. Thus, not to speak of the familiar,

"Non missura cutem, nisi plena cruoris, hirudo,"

of Horace, 'Ars Poet.' 476, we find it used in Plautus, 'Epid.' 181, of the cupidity of a slave, and in Theocritus, 'Idyll.' II. 55, of the devouring eagerness of love. That which is characteristic of the creature, its voracious appetite, is here represented as its daughter, or rather, to express its intensity, as two daughters, uttering the same ceaseless cry for more.

15. *three things...yea, four*] The received form of a climax, as in Amos i. 3, &c.

16. *The grave*] Heb. *Sheol.* The "Hell" or Hades of xxvii. 20, all-consuming yet never full. The other instances explain themselves. Strangely different as they are, they have this one attribute in common.

17. There is a noteworthy fidelity here to the facts of natural history. The "ravens of the valley, or brook," still haunt the ravines of the torrent-streams of Syria. Their proneness to attack the eyes of living or dead animals is a matter of notoriety. Comp. Catull. CVIII. 5,

"Effossos oculos voret atro gutture corvus."

18—20. Another enigma. As four things widely different agreed in the common point of insatiableness, so do the four now mentioned in this, that they leave no trace behind them. In Wisdom v. 11, we have a fuller picture of the first of the four.

19. *the way of a man with a maid*] As commonly understood the words point to the fact that the act of sin leaves no outward mark upon the sinners.

21. *for four which it cannot bear*] There is no relative pronoun in the Hebrew, and its mention destroys the parallelism of the two clauses. Better, **four it cannot bear.** Here the common element is that of being intolerable, and the four examples are divided equally between the two sexes. Each has its examples of power and prosperity misused because they fall to the lot of those who have had no training for them, and are therefore in the wrong place.

23. *odious woman*] One in whom there is nothing loveable. Marriage, which to most women is the state in which they find scope for their highest qualities, blessing and being blest, becomes to her only a sphere in which to make herself and others miserable.

24. *exceeding wise*] A very slight change in the vowel-punctuation would give the reading which the LXX. and Vulg. follow, "wiser than the wise." The thought, in either case, turns upon the marvels of what we call instinct, which, in their own province, transcend the more elaborate results of human wisdom.

25. The question as to the habits of the ant has been noticed under vi. 7, 8. Here it will be enough to note the word "people" applied to them, as to the locusts in Joel i. 6.

strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

26 The conies *are but* a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them †by bands;

† Heb. *gathered together.*

28 The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

29 There be three *things* which go well, yea, four are comely in going:

30 A lion *which is* strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;

31 A ‖†greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom *there is* no rising up.

‖ Or, *horse.* † Heb. *girt in the loins.*

32 If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, *lay* thine hand upon thy mouth.

Job 21. 5 & 40. 4.

33 Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

The marvel lies in their collective, and, as it were, organized action.

26. *conies*] See, for the zoological identification of the animal thus named, the note on Lev. xi. 5, and for its habitat, Ps. civ. 18.

27. As in Joel ii. 7, 8, the most striking fact in the flight of the locust-swarms was their apparent order and discipline, sweeping over the land like the invasion of a great army.

28. *spider*] The word is not the same as that so translated in Job viii. 14 and Isai. lix. 5, and is to be identified with the Gecko (or Stellio), a genus of the lizard tribe, many species of which haunt houses, make their way through crevices in the walls, and with feet that secrete a venomous exudation catch the spiders or the flies they find there. An incidental notice of the habits of this animal, coupling it with the spider, meets us in the 'Confessions of Augustine' (x. 35), and is worth referring to. "Quid cum me domi sedentem stellio, muscas captans vel araneas retibus suis implicans, sæpe intentum facit."

29—31. At first this seems the nearest approach in the chapter to a simple contemplation of nature for its own sake. If any thought of man suggests itself, it is that as he is surpassed in wisdom, so is he surpassed in comeliness and majesty. Then suddenly, with an unexpected turn, the list ends, not with a fourth example from the lower creation, but with man himself, in the king who carries human glory to its ideal height. It is at least interesting, in connection with the conclusion to which we have been led, to compare this with the impression made on the Queen of Sheba by the glory of Solomon, 1 K. x. 5.

31. *A greyhound*] This word, occurring nowhere else in the O.T., is still more doubtful than those that have been discussed before. On the whole, it is believed, we may think of the war-horse as the animal meant. If so, we again have a point of contact with the book of Job (xxxix. 19—25). The LXX. however gives us "the cock strutting among his hens," and the Vulg. "Gallus succinctus lumbos." The literal meaning is, "one with loins girded;" and some have referred this to the stripes of the zebra, others to the "war-horse," as he is represented in the sculptures of Persepolis, with rich and stately trappings. Maurer has suggested a wrestler, girded for the fight, as the fittest rendering. There seems, however, more force in reserving the human example to the last; and it may be questioned whether the image presented by the wrestler ready for the contest does not belong to Greek art rather than to that of Israel or other Semitic nations.

a king, against whom there is no rising up] There is a great preponderance of authority in favour of rendering these words, "a king in the midst of his people," and the sense, as giving a more vivid picture, is certainly more satisfactory. (See Note below.)

32. *lay thine hand upon thy mouth*] The act expresses, as in Job xxi. 5, xxix. 9, xl. 4, silence, reverence, awe. We are left in some doubt, however, whether the silence here is that of humiliation and repentance after the sin has been committed, or that of self-restraint, which checks the haughty or malignant thought before it has passed even into words. Probably the true interpretation is found in combining both views, and referring the first meaning to the act, the second to the intention. Silence and reflection are right in either case.

33. *churning,...wringing,...forcing*] The A.V., by a needless variation of the one Hebrew verb, misses the point of the proverb. "The pressure of milk produces curds, the pressure of the nose produces blood, the pressure of wrath (sc. brooding over and, as it were, condensing it) produces strife." The Hebrew, in using for "wrath" the dual of the noun (אַפַּיִם) the singular of which (אַף) is rendered "nose," gives another point which no translation can reproduce.

NOTES on CHAP. XXX. 15, 31.

15. The word rendered "horseleach" (עלוקה, "Alukah") is found here only in the Old Testament. The fact that it is rendered in the LXX. by βδέλλα, and in the Vulg. by "sanguisuga," is evidence that there was an early Jewish consent as to its meaning, and it is so taken by most commentators. The verb עלק, "to suck," with which it is probably connected, suggests a like meaning, and it is confirmed by the evidence in Sanscrit of a word *jalūkâ*, as applied to the leach. Fürst, it is true, speaks of the resemblance as an "accidental alliteration" ('Lexicon' s.v.), but it may more probably be looked on as an example of the onomatopœic formation of words in each language.

Recent scholars, however (Schultens, Gesenius, Döderlein, Bertheau, Hitzig and others), have seen in the words the name of a vampire-like monster, like the *Ghoul* of which we read in the 'Arabian Nights,' draining men of their life-blood, and compare it with the *Lilith* of Isai. xxxiv. 14 (screech owl in A.V.), the female spectre that haunts the waste places of ruined cities, of whom strange tales are told in Jewish demonology, and with the *Lamia* of the Greeks. A reference to such a monster is found in the Targum on Ps. xii. 8, where the paraphrase runs: "The wicked go round about as the *Alukah* that drinks the blood of men." There seems, however, no adequate reason for assuming such an allusion here, where the ordinary rendering gives a sufficient sense. The "two daughters," in either case, represent the intense never-satisfied craving of which the proverb speaks. It lies in the nature of such a "dark saying" as this, that there may be a two-fold reference, (1) to the natural fact described, and (2) to the restless, inordinate desire of which it is the symbol. A curiously parallel proverb is found in the 'Hitopadeça' (Lassen, p. 66, quoted by Hitzig, l. 1371, ed. Johnson). "The fire is never satisfied with wood, nor the sea with rivers, nor the god of death with all that live, nor fair-eyed maidens with lovers." Comp. also the same line of thought in Eccles. i. 7, 8.

31. The A.V. rendering of אַלְקוּם, "against whom there is no rising up," rests on the assumption that the negative אל forms with the verb a compound word which is used as a predicate, "A king irresistible." So Fürst, Bertheau, Ewald (comp. note on xii. 28). Rosenmüller, following Pococke, assumes that the אַלְקוּם represents an Arabic word = "with his people," and finds a support to this view in the LXX. δημηγορῶν ἐν ἔθνει. Hitzig, somewhat rashly, takes a conjectural emendation אֱלֹהִים עִמּוֹ = "God is with him."

CHAPTER XXXI.

1 Lemuel's lesson of chastity and temperance. 6 The afflicted are to be comforted and defended. 10 The praise and properties of a good wife.

THE words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.

2 What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

3 Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

4 *It is* not for kings, O Lemuel,

CHAP. XXXI. Here also, as in xxx., the reader is referred to the Introduction.

1. *that his mother taught him*] Stress has been laid in the earlier chapters of the book on the respect due to the "law" or "precepts" of the mother as well as of the father, i. 8, vi. 20. Here the sage reproduces the very words of that teaching. If we refer the chapter to Israelite authorship, we may remember the instances of Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, as examples of the honour paid to the wisdom of woman; if to Edomite or Arabian, we may think of the queen whose love of wisdom led her to sit at the feet of the son of David.

2. *What*] The repetition is clearly that of emphasis, the expression of the mother's anxious love.

son of my vows] Like Samuel, and Samson, the child often asked for in prayer, the prayer ratified by a vow of dedication. The name Lemuel (lit. "for God," sc. consecrated to Him) may be looked upon as probably the expression of that dedication, and the warning against indulging in wine shews that it had something, at least, of the Nazarite or Rechabite idea in it.

3. *to that which destroyeth*] Literally, "unmarrow," and so "enervate" or "destroy." A slight change in the vowel-points gives a closer parallelism with the first clause, "those (sc. the women) that enervate, or undo, kings." Sc. the sin of sensual lust. The temptations of the harem were then, as now, the curse of all Eastern kingdoms.

4. The repetition of emphasis again. There is no doubt as to the general sense, but the readings vary, and give (1) that of the A.V.,

it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

5 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and † pervert the judgment † of any of the afflicted.

6 [a] Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be † of heavy hearts.

7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

8 Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all † such as are appointed to destruction.

9 Open thy mouth, [b] judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

10 ¶ [c] Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies.

11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

13 She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.

15 She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

16 She considereth a field, and † buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

18 † She perceiveth that her merchandise *is* good: her candle goeth not out by night.

† Heb. *alter.* † Heb. *of all the sons of affliction.* [a] Ps. 104. 15. † Heb. *bitter of soul.* † Heb. *the sons of destruction.* [b] Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 16. [c] chap. 12. 4. † Heb. *taketh.* † Heb. *She tasteth.*

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(2) "nor for princes to say, Where is strong drink?" (3) "and for princes there should be no strong drink."

strong drink] As in Prov. xx. 1, distilled from barley, or honey, or dates. 1 K. xvi. 9 may be referred to as an example of kingly drunkenness.

6. The teaching does not sanction any false asceticism, but recognizes, like that of Ps. civ. 15, the true purpose of the mysterious power of wine over man's mind and body, as a restorative and remedial agent. Comp. Homer, 'Il.' VI. 261. The same thought shewed itself in the Jewish practice of giving a cup of wine to mourners, and even (as in the history of the Crucifixion) to criminals at their execution.

8. In contrast with the two besetting sins of Eastern monarchs stands what was looked on as, and actually was, their one great duty, to give help to those who had no other helper, to redress the wrongs of those who were too crushed to complain of them, to interpose between the oppressor and his victims.

all such as are appointed to destruction] Lit. "children of bereavement," with the sense, either, as in the text, of those "destined to be bereaved of life or goods" (Hitzig, Bertheau) or of "bereaved or fatherless children" (Schultens, Rosenmüller, Maurer).

10. See Introduction.

rubies] Better, **pearls**. See note on iii. 15.

11. *he shall have no need of spoil*] Better, perhaps, **no lack of gain**. The same word for "spoil" is used as in i. 13, but obviously with a better meaning. There shall be no lack of honest gain, no need therefore of dishonest.

13. *worketh willingly with her hands*] Literally, "work with willingness of her hands." **Work with willing hands** may be suggested as giving the meaning of the original. The stress laid on the industrial habits of Israelite matrons may perhaps belong to a time when, as under the monarchy of Judah, those habits were passing away. An interesting parallel may be found in the picture of Lucretia, "nocte sera, deditam lanæ, inter lucubrantes ancillas in medio ædium sedentem invenerunt" (Liv. I. 57).

14. The fact that such a comparison suggested itself points to the enlarged commerce of the Israelites consequent on their intercourse with the Phœnicians under David and Solomon. *v.* 24 gives a special instance of what is here part of a general description.

15. *a portion to her maidens*] Here probably the word is used as in Ex. v. 14 for the daily task assigned to each at the same time as the daily food. Comp. xxx. 8, where the two words here rendered "meat" and "portion" are combined in the phrase, "food convenient for me."

16. The verse is noteworthy as pointing to a large sphere of feminine activity, strikingly in contrast with the degradation to which woman has fallen under the later polygamy of the East.

18. *her candle goeth not out*] By some this has been understood figuratively, as in xiii. 9, xx. 20, xxiv. 20, but the literal meaning is more in harmony with the context.

19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

† Heb. *She spreadeth.*

20 †She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household *are* clothed with ‖scarlet.

‖ Or, *double garments.*

22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing *is* silk and purple.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth *it;* and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

25 Strength and honour *are* her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness.

27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praiseth her.

29 Many daughters ‖have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

‖ Or, *have gotten riches.*

30 Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

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19. The picture of feminine industry resembles that drawn by the Roman poets:

"Cinerem et sopitos suscitat ignes,
Noctem addens operi, famulasque ad lumina longo
Exercet penso." Virg. 'Æ.' VIII. 410—412.

"Læva colum molli lana retinebat amictum,
Dextera tum leviter deducens fila supinis
Formabat digitis; tum prono in pollice torquens,
Libratum tereti versabat turbine fusum."
Catull., 'De nupt. Pel. et Thet.' 311—314.

20. The industry is not selfish, but bears the fruit of an open-handed charity.

21. *scarlet*] The words probably point to some well-known articles of dress, at once conspicuous for their colour and their warmth. Comp. Note below.

22. *silk*] Better, as elsewhere, **fine linen**, sc. the *byssus* of Egypt.

23. The industry of the wife leaves the husband free to take his place, arrayed as beseems his rank, among the elders that sit in councils. Comp. the words of Nausicaa to her father in Hom. 'Odyss.' VI. 60:

Καὶ δέ σοι αὐτῷ ἔοικε μετὰ πρώτοισιν ἐόντα
Βουλὰς βουλεύειν καθαρὰ χροῒ εἵματ' ἔχοντα.

"'Tis meet for thee to sit among the princes,
And hold thy council, with thy body clad
In raiment fair and clean."

24. *fine linen*] The word is different from that used in *v.* 22, and describes, as in Isai. iii. 23, a made-up garment.

merchant] Literally, "Canaanite," sc. the Phœnician merchant, the word having become generic. Comp. Isai. xxiii. 8; Ezek. xvii. 4.

25. *shall rejoice in time to come*] Better, **rejoiceth over the time to come**; sc. looks forward to the future, not with anxious care, but with confident gladness.

26. *law of kindness*] The second noun, as in the corresponding phrase "law of liberty" in James ii. 12, gives the characterizing attribute of the first. The words which come from the lips of the true wife are as a law giving guidance and instruction to those that hear them, but the law is not proclaimed in its sterner aspects, commanding and threatening, but as one in which "mercy tempers justice," and love, which is the fulfilling of the law, is seen also to be the source from which it springs.

29. The change of person indicates that we have the very words of the praise which the husband (as in *v.* 28) is supposed to have addressed to the ideal wife.

have done virtuously] The Hebrew word that answers to the English adverb (חיל) has primarily (like the Latin "virtus"), the idea of "strength," but is used with various shades of meaning. Here, as in xii. 4; Ruth iii. 11, the strength is that of character stedfast in goodness; and "valiantly," or better, perhaps, "virtuously" (as in xii. 4), is an adequate rendering. In other passages, as *e.g.* in Gen. xxxiv. 29; Ps. xlix. 10, it has the sense of "riches," and is so taken here by the LXX. ἐκτήσαντο πλοῦτον, and the Vulg. "congregaverunt divitias."

30. The last lesson of the book is the same as the first. The fear of the Lord is the condition of all womanly, as well as manly, excellence.

NOTE on CHAP. XXXI. 21.

The word rendered "scarlet" (שָׁנִם) occurs in this sense in Isai. i. 18 and elsewhere. The LXX. however renders it (reading the word obviously with different vowel-points שְׁנַיִם), as δισσὰς, and the Vulg. "duplicibus." And this, together with the fact that texture rather than colour would more naturally be specified in speaking of garments as a protection against cold, has led Rosenmüller to accept that reading as the true one.

ECCLESIASTES.

INTRODUCTION.

1. ALTHOUGH the name of Solomon is not prefixed to this book as it is to the Proverbs and the Song of Songs, yet the description of the author (i. 1, and i. 12) applies so definitely to him and to no other, that it answers the same purpose as if he were named. Accordingly this book is placed, in the most ancient Jewish and Christian lists, between the other two books attributed to him, and the constant tradition of the Jewish and Christian Churches has handed down Solomon without question as the author.

It is not surprising if in the case of so ancient a book there is no external contemporary evidence in addition to this statement and tradition, to prove—if proof be called for—that Solomon is the author of the book.

Although no other person known to history has been suggested as the author, yet it is alleged that Solomon could not have written it, because the language is such as no Jew in his age could have used, because the language differs from that of Proverbs and the Song of Songs, and because the historical allusions in the book do not agree with the period and the circumstances of Solomon.

2. In the seventeenth century, Grotius, observing that the book contains words which are found elsewhere only in Daniel, Ezra, and the Chaldee Targums, announced his opinion ('Comm. in Eccles.' I. 1) that it was not a work of Solomon, but was written in a later age under his name. Grotius however specified only a very few[1] words; and although his opinion was quoted by Gibbon ('Decline and Fall,' XLI.) with praise of his free spirit, it seemed sufficient for Bossuet and Calmet to reply that it was not surprising if Solomon borrowed to that extent from the language of neighbouring people with whom he had much intercourse.

But the opinion of Grotius was adopted by many critics in the next century. Supported by their increased philological learning, it came to be in the first half of the present century the tenet of the majority of commentators, who agreed that the book could not have been written earlier than the commencement of the Chaldean invasion of Palestine, B.C. 770, when the introduction of a Chaldee element into the ancient Hebrew tongue is supposed to have begun. And at the present day this is generally maintained both by distinguished Biblical critics of Protestant Germany, and by some scholars in England.

These views were most completely represented in the Commentary of Knobel (1836), which contained a list (pp. 69—74) of Aramaisms collected in support of his opinion that the book was written after the Babylonish captivity. The words, forms, and usages which he classifies as found either in Chaldee only or in late Hebrew only, and not in the

[1] See Carpzov, 'Introd. ad Lib. Bib.' II. 204.

Hebrew of Solomon's age, amount to nearly 90, and some of them occur several times in the book. Two years afterwards Herzfeld, who also believed (though on different grounds) that the book is the work of a late writer, revised that extensive list ('Koheleth,' pp. 12—22), and shewed that most of the so-called Aramaisms are not peculiar to Ecclesiastes and later books, but exist in such books as the Pentateuch, Isaiah, and the Psalms; and, while he added some expressions considered by him to be Aramaic and overlooked by Knobel, he reduced the total to 8 or 10 Chaldee, and 11 or 15 late Hebrew words. In 1856, Herzfeld's list was enlarged by Dr Davidson ('Introduction to the O. T.' 787); but in the same year Herzfeld's strictures on Knobel's list were confirmed by the independent criticism of L. Von Essen. In 1864 the subject was reviewed by E. Böhl in a 'Dissertatio de Aramaismis libri Koheleth;' and at the same time Dr Pusey ('Daniel,' p. 325), taking up the question where it had been left by Herzfeld, shewed that many of the words regarded by him and by Knobel as distinctly Chaldee are common to other Semitic dialects, and therefore are useless as evidence of the Chaldee origin or late date of the language of Ecclesiastes; and that many of the expressions designated as late Hebrew by Herzfeld either have earlier precedents overlooked by him, or are used to denote ideas not expressed in earlier writings. Dr Pusey's conclusion is that not one word has been found in Ecclesiastes to characterize a later age than Solomon's. Among more recent critics, Zöckler (1868) regards the Aramaisms as among the surest signs that Ecclesiastes was written after the captivity: but his view on this question is not adopted by his learned and intelligent American editor, Dr Tayler Lewis (1870). And Dr B. Schäfer (1870), after examining nearly all the controverted words, concludes in favour of the authorship of Solomon[1].

On the whole, it would appear that every word quoted from Ecclesiastes as impossible to be used before the captivity has been shewn either (1) to be used in books written, as is generally believed, before the captivity; or (2) to be formed from words, and by a grammatical process, in use before the cap-

[1] The following list of Chaldee words in Ecclesiastes is given by Dr Davidson as shewing clearly that the book was written after the Babylonian captivity. Zöckler's list is nearly identical with this. To each word I have added the substance of the remarks which have been made on it by Dr Pusey, or other Hebraists, who hold that the word in question was known in the age of Solomon and might have been used by him.

אלו vi. 6, *if*, is identical with, though differently pointed from, אלו, a simple conjunction which is found in Syr. and Sam. as well as in Chaldee. Dr Pusey rejects the conjecture of most grammarians that it is compounded of אם and לו, which he regards as incompatible conjunctions.

זוע xii. 3, *to tremble*, exists in Arab. and Syr. as well as in Chaldee; and its derivatives occur in Genesis, Deut. and Isai.

זמן iii. 1, *fitting time*, is found in Arab., Æthiop., Maltese, as well as in Chaldee.

כשר xi. 6, *to be fortunate*. Its derivatives occur in Ps. lxviii. 7 and Prov. xxxi. 19.

מדינה ii. 8, *city*, or *province*, lit. *place of jurisdiction*. The sense, form, and derivation from דין are purely Hebrew. Besides Ecclesiastes, it is used in 1 K. xx. 14, &c.; Lam. i. 1; Ezek. xix. 8, as well as in later books.

פתגם viii. 11, *a decree*, a foreign word older than Pehlevi, naturalized in Syriac. See also this Commentary, Vol. III. p. 424.

פשר viii. 1, *interpretation*. The same word, with changes of the middle letter, is found in Hebrew (Gen. xl. 16, &c.), Syriac, Arab. and Æthiop.

שלט ii. 19, *to rule*, occurs in Ps. cxix. 133; and a derivative from it occurs in Gen. xlii. 6. See also this Commentary, Vol. I. p. 447.

תקן i. 15, *to be straight*, is found in Arab. and Syr. as well as in Chaldee.

תקף iv. 12, *to prevail*, occurs Job xiv. 20 and xv. 24, and is found in Arab. as well as in Chaldee.

כבר i. 10, *long ago*, is found also in Syr. as an adverb; and occurs in another form Gen. xxxv. 16, xlviii. 7, &c.

בטל xii. 3, *to cease*, is "a Semitic word common to every dialect, Arab., Æth., Maltese, Syr., Zab.," as well as Chaldee.

ענין ii. 26, *toil*, a word peculiar to Ecclesiastes, is derived from a root which is common to old Hebrew, Arab. and Syr.

חוץ ii. 25, *without*, *beyond*, is an old Hebrew word, frequently used in the Pentateuch with reference to places.

מלאה xi. 5. lit. *full*. This adjective is old Hebrew, and in the sense of *full* occurs in Gen. xxiii. 9, and elsewhere frequently.

This list is accompanied by another list of 11 philosophical expressions, which however appear to be cited, not as words introduced into the Hebrew language in a later age, but rather as used first in Ecclesiastes in an abstract sense.

tivity; or (3) to be represented in such books by a derivative; or (4) to be undoubtedly common to other Semitic dialects besides Chaldee, and therefore, presumably, to Hebrew before the captivity, although not found in extant writings of earlier date than Ecclesiastes. And thus the allegation that the language of this book shews distinct traces of the Chaldean invasion, of the Babylonian captivity, or of any later event which affected the Hebrew tongue, appears to have been sufficiently answered.

3. It is not to be denied that in the list of writers who maintain that the language of Ecclesiastes could not have been used by a Jew in Solomon's age, are to be found the names of some of the most eminent Hebrew grammarians to whom is mainly due the advance of Hebrew philology in the last hundred years. But when they proceed to define the time at which according to their principles of criticism the book must have been written, they diverge so widely from one another as to suggest a serious doubt whether such grammatical knowledge of Hebrew as is now attainable ought to be allowed all the weight that is claimed for it in deciding the date of the composition of this book. The reader will judge for himself when he sees the following list (which is taken from Dr B. Schäfer's 'Neue Untersuchungen über das Buch Koheleth') of the various dates assigned to Ecclesiastes by modern critics.

	B. C.
Nachtigal places the time of its origin between Solomon and Jeremiah	975—588
Paulus, Schmidt and Jahn, between Manasseh and Zedekiah	699—588
Grotius, Kaiser, and Eichhorn, in the time of Zerubbabel	536—500
Hermann, v. d. Hardt, Nachman, Krochmal, Umbreit, Bernstein, Hengstenberg; the Persian period	538—333
Keil, under Artaxerxes I.	465—424
Hävernik; middle of 5th century; so Weber and Zöckler	450—400
Rosenmüller; between Nehemiah and Alexander	450—333
Ewald; 100 years before Alexander	430
Stähelin, Davidson, Elster, and Vaihinger; later Persian period	420—330
Gerlach	400
[Ginsburg	350–340]
De Wette and Knobel; end of the Persian and beginning of the Macedonian period	350—300
Bürger, Bergst; time of Alexander's sojourn in Palestine	333
E. Maier	300
Bertholdt, Zirkel, Gelbe; between Alexander and Antiochus	333—164
Vatke, Hartmann; Syro-Maccabean period	300—100
Böttcher	210
Hitzig	204
Grätz; the time of Herod the Great	8

The observations which Renan has made on a similar divergence of critical opinions respecting the age of the Song of Songs may well be applied to the above list. "A vrai dire, nous croyons qu'une si forte divergence n'aurait pas dû se produire, et qu'elle tient à la méthode incomplète que les hébraisants de l'école de Gesenius ont portée dans la détermination de l'âge des livres hébreux. Exclusivement préoccupés des particularités grammaticales, ils ont trop négligé les considérations historiques et littéraires, qui ne sont pas moins importantes que celles de la philologie dans les questions du genre de celle dont il s'agit en ce moment.—La langue du *Cantique* a paru aux minutieux grammairiens qui ont renouvelé il y a moins d'un siècle la science de l'Hébreu incliner vers les formes de l'époque chaldéenne, c'est-à-dire de l'époque qui commence un peu avant la captivité. Quelques mots leur ont semblé ne pouvoir être que de l'époque persane ou même de l'époque grecque. Les chaldaïsmes sont, quand il s'agit de l'âge des livres hébreux, un critérium fort dangereux. On prend souvent pour des chaldaïsmes certaines particularités des dialectes du nord de la Palestine, ou des traits de langage populaire." 'Le Cantique,' &c. pp. 90, 108.

4. But still, it must be frankly admitted that this does not meet every difficulty arising from the language of Ecclesiastes. No one after reading the

first nine chapters of Proverbs, or the Song of Songs, can pass on to Ecclesiastes without perceiving that there is a very great dissimilarity in the style and diction. This did not escape the observation of Bishop Lowth ('De Sacrâ Poesi Heb.' Præl. XXIV. and XXXI.), who, while expressing unmixed approbation of the two former books, says of the "other work of Solomon," Ecclesiastes, "alia est totius operis ratio, alius color, longe dispar stylus....Stylus est plane singularis; dictio est humilis plerumque et submissa, sed imprimis obscura; sæpe laxa, et dissolúta et sermoni proprior; nec in compositione et structura multum viget poeticus character; quæ forsan videri possunt argumenti naturæ aliquatenus tribuenda[1]."

The difference has been accounted for to some extent, first, by the difference of subject, as Bp. Lowth points out. Abstract ideas may be expressed up to a certain point by words which originally denoted something else: but philosophic thought gradually forms its own terminology. Therefore even a man of poetical genius, in writing a philosophic work, would be constrained to use, perhaps to invent, philosophic expressions and abstract forms of words, such as not only distinguish this book from the other two, but also bring upon it undeserved suspicion merely because such words did not become common until a later and more philosophic age.

Next, it is argued, there was an interval of many years between the composition of the two former books and of Ecclesiastes; and in that time there was a natural change in the temperament, views, and style of the writer; a change which may be traced partly to Solomon's familiarity with foreign women sprung from various Semitic races, partly also to his extensive negotiations and personal intercourse with the representatives of other nations, some of whom were not of Semitic origin. For Solomon swayed the population of a vast empire, of which only a small part was occupied by the Twelve Tribes, whose language was Hebrew, whereas in its other parts the vernacular tongues of his other subjects were not identical with that offshoot of the great Semitic stem. He also cultivated friendly relations with foreign nations (1 K. iv. 34), some like Tyre speaking a kindred language, others like Tharshish capable of importing entirely foreign words into the national records of the Hebrews (1 K. x. 22). The daily occupations and chosen pursuits of the great Hebrew king must have carried him far out of the sphere of ordinary Hebrew life, thought and language; and must have stamped on his character and his expressions a mark which grew deeper as he advanced in years, and distinguished him from his former self, as well as from the writers who preceded him.

These remarks, it is argued, are confirmed by the instances which the history of literature supplies, of the same writer expressing his thoughts in different styles. For instance, there is a difference between the speeches and the narrative of the Greek historian Thucydides with which every reader is familiar; and even the style of his narrative varies at the close of his history compared with the commencement. The Greek tragedians make a difference in the dialect, diction, and metre of the chorus compared with the dialogue. So in our own language the style of Milton in his 'Ode on the Nativity,' written in his 21st year, differs widely from 'Samson Agonistes.' a product of his old age. Even in our own generation there is a remarkable difference between the earlier prose style of Dean Milman and that of his 'History of Latin Christianity.' Holy Scripture itself supplies a striking instance of the same kind, which was noticed as a source of perplexity even by so early a writer as Dionysius of Alexandria. The Revelation of St John presents some remarkable differences of style and language if compared with the Gospel and Epistles. In the present state of our information, this dissimilarity seems thoroughly incapable of being explained by us; yet, taking all the facts into account, we regard, with sufficient reason, the whole of these books as the work of the same author.

Lastly, as is stated by Zöckler and others, while there is an undoubted difference between the diction of the Canticles and Proverbs on the one hand

[1] Dr Adam Clarke, whose Commentary was written in 1813, says of Ecclesiastes, "I must say the language and style puzzle me not a little." Quoted by Dr Ginsburg.

and Ecclesiastes on the other, there are also some characteristic resemblances between them. It is reasonable to regard these as an indication of a common origin; and as such to be set in the balance against the acknowledged differences.

As a summing up of the whole argument respecting the language of Ecclesiastes, I venture to borrow the words (*mutatis mutandis*) in which a recent critic has summed up the similar controversy respecting the writer of the Revelation. "Thus, all things considered, being it is true far from satisfied with any account at present given of the peculiar style and phenomena of [Ecclesiastes], but being far less satisfied with the arguments of the antagonists of the [Solomonic] authorship, I am not prepared to withhold my assent from the firm and unshaken testimony of primitive tradition that the author was [Solomon]." Dean Alford[1], 'Greek Testament,' Prolegomena on the Revelation, § I. 119.

5. The arguments against this tradition which have been thus far reviewed are derived entirely from its language and style. But it is farther alleged that the book contains various historical statements and allusions which are utterly irreconcileable with the supposition that Solomon is the real, and not merely the assumed, author. These statements must therefore be examined.

It is alleged that the particular mention of Jerusalem i. 1, and most emphatically i. 12, as the seat of Solomon's reign, implies that the book was written at a time when there was more than one seat of kingly authority in Israel, *i.e.* after the separation of the ten tribes and the erection of another capital, Samaria. The answer is that there is an obvious fitness in the specific mention of Jerusalem in connection with Solomon in those two passages previous to the account of his labours in the first two chapters, for it was the scene of his peculiar work for many years, and the place which he had made the chief monument of his grandeur.

It is alleged that the expression "I was king," i. 12, implies that at the time when these words were written Solomon was no longer king, and that consequently the passage must have been written by some one personating him after his death. But, whatever may be the force of the preterite in other languages, in Hebrew it is used with strict grammatical propriety in describing a past which extends into the present. Gesenius ('Hebrew Grammar,' Bagster's edition, § 126, p. 204) says that the Hebrew preterite is used "for our present, where this denotes a condition or attribute already long continued and still existing, or a permanent or habitual action." After giving examples, he goes on to exemplify its use *when the speaker views the* action or *state expressed by the verb as then* first about coming to pass, *in progress*, or perhaps occurring at the instant. The words in italics exactly describe the use of the preterite by Solomon in this passage. Moreover, it is worthy of note that modern history affords a singular example of the use of this very expression by one who was a reigning king when he used it, and whose feelings may have been not unlike those of Solomon. A biographer of Louis XIV. gives this touching account of the old age of that great monarch: "Aveuglé par l'orgueil et par l'habitude du pouvoir absolu, il s'avançait au tombeau la tête encore remplie de projets désastreux...Vers les derniers jours de sa vie, renonçant aux intérêts terrestres, il négligea tous les autres soins, pour ne plus penser qu'à Dieu, et uniquement occupé de son néant on l'entendit souvent s'écrier "Quand j'étois roi!" ('Nouvelle Biographie Générale,' XXXI. 834). The phrase therefore would be both grammatically correct if used by Solomon before the close of his reign, and a natural expression of his feelings in his old age.

It is alleged that the writer in asserting (i. 16 and ii. 7) his own superiority in point of wisdom and riches above all that were in Jerusalem before him, must have referred exclusively to royal personages; and, it is added, as there was only one king, David, before him, he could not have written in such language. But the limitation of the word "all" to kings is a pure assumption which nothing in the context justifies. The

[1] Compare the similar remarks of Dr Davidson in 1851 with respect to the Revelation. 'Introd. to the N. Testament,' Vol. III. p. 590.

writer compares himself with all who in former times, in Jerusalem, possessed wisdom or riches, possessions which are certainly not confined to kings. Moreover, if kings only had been indicated by the writer, it is evident that Jerusalem had its kings many centuries before Solomon; see Gen. xiv. 18; Joshua x. 1; 2 S. xxiv. 23. These passages therefore afford no argument against the authorship of Solomon.

It is alleged that the writer's description of his own riches, wisdom, and greatness, i. 16 and ii. 7, 9, would be incompatible with modesty and true greatness if uttered by Solomon, and therefore must come from some other writer. It might be said in reply that even if Solomon were proved to be deficient in those qualities, the book might still have been written by him. But in fact those descriptions are certainly within the truth as stated in history; and a man who is aware of the gifts which God has given him, and mentions them to point a self-humiliating moral (i. 18 and ii. 11), does not thereby lay himself open to a charge of ostentation.

It is argued on the one hand that the state of popular misery, oppression, and violence described here in terms strongly condemnatory of the authors of such disorder, would not have been so described by Solomon, because he, as the supreme ruler of the people, was responsible for it, and therefore he would not have placed on record a description of it. It might be answered that the suffering people here described are not identified with any particular country: and Solomon, who was certainly competent to illustrate his meaning by a reference to the condition of foreign nations, may have referred to them without impeaching his own government. There is however not the least improbability in supposing that Solomon's own subjects are here referred to by him. For all sovereigns who are intimately acquainted with the condition of their people, and specially absolute rulers administering a large empire through numerous deputies, are aware of and must deplore the infliction of much misery which they are unable to prevent or to avenge.

It is argued on the other hand that such a state of violence, popular oppression and despotic rule, as that which is instanced in this book, did not exist in Palestine in the peaceful reign of Solomon. This allegation has no foundation in fact. The significant statements of historians, *e.g.* 1 K. xii. 4 and 2 Chro. ii. 17, 18 and viii. 7—9; and the numerous unmistakeable allusions in the book of Proverbs, *e.g.* i. 10—13, vi. 16—19, xi. 26, xiv. 20, xxii. 22, 23, xxiv. 21, xxv. 5, xxviii. 2, 16, agree with the descriptions in Ecclesiastes in shewing that the kingdom of Israel, even in its most prosperous days, afforded grievous instances of the common evils of Asiatic despotism. See Note at the end of ch. iv.

It is stated that the reference in Ecclesiastes to a future judgment, when all the present irregularities in God's moral government of this world shall be rectified by the Judge of quick and dead, and the explicit declaration about the return of the soul to God, shew a knowledge of revealed truth beyond what was given prior to the captivity[1]. But if the exact words of Ecclesiastes be compared with the obscure intimations given by Moses on the one hand, and with the later utterances of Daniel on the other, this book appears to hold a middle place. It tallies very closely with some of the psalms which were probably written about the age of Solomon, *e.g.* with regard to the judgment of the world, Pss. i. 5, ix. 8, xcvi. 13, and with regard to the souls of the dead being with God, Ps. xvi. 8—11. After all, does not the argument above mentioned proceed on an assumption that we are more competent than we really are to find out the ways of the Author of Revelation? Do we know enough of the laws which regulated the progress of Revelation through successive ages to feel sure that that progress was uniform? Should we, for instance, have expected Daniel's plain announcement of the fact of the Resurrection, xii. 2, to have followed two hundred years after Isaiah's (xxv. 8) and Hosea's (xiii. 14) triumphant declarations of the victory of Humanity over Death, which sound like comments on a fact already known? Are we then qualified to decide positively that so much as is recorded on those subjects in Ecclesiastes came

[1] See Introduction to the Psalms, § 17.

out of its proper season if it was given to Solomon?

Two or three additional arguments against the Solomonic authorship of this book have been drawn from its contents, but they do not seem to call for any special consideration. Thus it has been alleged that the book itself does not claim to have been written by Solomon, because in Eccles. i. 1 he is only described as the son of David king of Jerusalem, whereas in the superscriptions of his other reputed writings he is mentioned by name. It is alleged that Solomon, having an heir-apparent in the person of Rehoboam, could not have expressed the doubt (Eccles. ii. 18) as to whose hands his possessions would fall into at his death. It is alleged that Solomon could not have set before himself as an object (Eccles. ii. 3) "to see what was that good for the sons of men which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life," because it was not till many centuries after the age of Solomon that Greek Philosophy first suggested the idea of endeavouring to discover the *summum bonum.* The reader may be left to determine what weight should be attached to these arguments.

6. Although the researches of modern critics have brought into prominence a difficulty which was not formerly perceived, yet, on the whole, it seems the most reasonable course to accept as a simple statement of fact the words with which Ecclesiastes begins; and, in accordance with the voice of the Church from the beginning, to regard Solomon as the author of this book. We are not indeed bound to assert this fact in such a way as if the authorship of a book of Scripture were of the same importance to readers of Scripture, as the spiritual facts revealed and the practical rules inculcated therein. But so plain a statement, when it is consistent with all known historical facts concerning the person and the age referred to, cannot be explained away or set aside merely because such knowledge, as can now be attained of a very ancient language, is not sufficiently minute to enable any one to give a perfectly satisfactory account of the peculiarities of phraseology which characterize the book.

II. Object, Plan, and Tendency of the Book.

1. The question, what was the object of the writer in composing this book, must be treated apart from that which concerns its position in the Bible as a portion of the progressive revelation of the Divine Will. Men of God spake of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But the immediate object of each writer may be inferred from the contents of his book and from his character and circumstances.

Dr Ginsburg, in the copious Introduction to his learned Commentary on Ecclesiastes, has collected the various opinions of nearly all expositors as to the object and plan of the book. Amongst those who treat it as the work of Solomon, some have held the untenable theory that it is intended to be a record of that monarch's repentance. But it is obvious that God is never addressed in this book in the language of a penitent. There is no expression of remorse: no trace of fall followed by recovery. Another notion must be set aside, which was introduced into English literature by Cartwright, Granger and the early Puritans, that this book is a philosophical inquiry, in the manner of Aristotle, after the *summum bonum.* Both the method of Greek philosophy and its principles[1], Epicurean, Stoic, and Cynic, have been attributed to the author of Ecclesiastes; but on no better ground than might be found in the writings of any thoughtful and sensitive man who has felt, contemplated and described, the perplexities of human life. The Oriental mind does not adhere to the logical method of intellectual research: and the rooted faith of the Hebrews in a personal God would not allow stray doubts, which might naturally occur to any thinker, to grow up and arrange themselves into principles of a godless philosophy. The author of Ecclesiastes writes down his thoughts apparently in the order in which they occur to him, without pausing to arrange them according to a preconceived plan. He states difficulties truthfully in the form in which

[1] See the admirable remarks of Pascal ('Pensées,' Pt. I. Art. xi. § 4) on the source of the errors of the Epicureans and the Stoics.

they present themselves to him; and if he cannot see through them he makes no attempt to hide his own ignorance, but leaves them in the hand of God, Whose Power and Justice are a sufficient answer to all difficulties in his mind.

The author was evidently a man of profound faith in God, of large and varied personal experience, of acute observation of men and things, and of deep sensibility. Probably he was first moved to write by a mind painfully full of the disappointing nature of all things viewed apart from God. Next to this we shall not err in ascribing to him a deep sympathy with fellow-men touched by the same natural feelings as himself, and suffering like him, though each in their several ways. And thirdly, there is on his part an evident desire to lead other men, and specially young men, out of the temptations which he had felt, and out of the perplexities which once entangled and staggered him. Whether his heart was chilled by old age or by the cold shadow of some former eclipse of faith can only be conjectured; but there is in Ecclesiastes an absence of that fervour of zeal for the glory of God which glows in other books, and which we are justified in regarding as a feature of Solomon's character in his early days. His immediate object would seem then to be to relieve his mind by pouring out the results of his own life, to comfort those who bore the same burden of humanity, and to lift up those who were naturally feeble or depressed by circumstances and to lead them in the way of God's commandments.

2. Critics who have studied Ecclesiastes with the greatest diligence entertain very different opinions as to its plan. Some have given it up as a maze without any designed arrangement: others think that it is constructed on a highly artificial and elaborate plan.

The writer of the book evidently regarded it as complete in itself. He states his subject and the question suggested by it at the beginning (i. 2, 3), and repeats it again at the end (xii. 8), and follows that repetition by a practical conclusion. And it is evident on a cursory perusal that here, as in the case of St Paul's Epistles, the first part of the book is contemplative or doctrinal, and the latter part practical.

Any careful reader who may try to analyze the book will probably find such points as the following prominent in his recollection. First, there is the writer's statement of his subject, and his detailed account of his personal experience of the influence of vanity pervading human proceedings (ch. i., ii.). Then, there is the announcement of an external law to which also human affairs are subject, *i.e.* the Will of God, Whose plan, incomprehensible in its extent, is found by all to be more or less in conflict with man's will (ch. iii., iv.), the result of such conflict being disappointment and perplexity to man. Then there is the commencement (in ch. v.) of personal practical advice, followed by a mixture of reflections, maxims, and exhortations, in which the vanity of riches, the practical superiority of wisdom and patience, and the supreme power of God, are the prominent topics set forth in various ways (ch. vi., vii., viii.). In the ixth chapter the writer's reflections, and in the xth his maxims, are brought to an end; and in ch. xi. and xii. we have a concluding exhortation to such conduct and sentiments as are most likely to alleviate the vanity of this life, viz. to charity, industry, patience and the fear of God. I have endeavoured in the notes to trace the connection of one part with another.

In any attempt to analyze this book it ought to be borne in mind that, as Bishop Lowth observes, the Hebrews always kept to the primitive way of imparting instruction, and giving explanations, in sentences or maxims, and that accurate and complicated divisions of subjects were unknown to them. Among modern critics, Vaihinger has propounded the most elaborate plan for the division of the whole book into four discourses, the discourses into thirteen sections, the sections into thirty-seven strophes, &c. The foundation for this superstructure is the recurrence at intervals in the book of the statement of that temporal good which is described as man's "portion" (ii. 24, iii. 12, v. 18, viii. 15). This has suggested a fourfold division of the book which is substantially adopted by at least five able

critics, Ewald, Vaihinger, Keil, Davidson, and Zöckler. According to this scheme there are four discourses in the book; the first, ch. i., ii.; the second, iii.—v.; the third, vi.—viii. 15; the fourth, viii. 16 to the end. There is great divergence even among those writers as to how far the subdivision of the discourses should be carried, and how the contents of each discourse should be described. The whole scheme seems too artificial for the age and circumstances of the author: but it is due to those critics to record an analysis which they agree in regarding as agreeable to the mind of the writer and useful to the reader.

3. If the book was composed, as seems probable, towards the end of Solomon's reign, its direct tendency is obvious. In an age when "silver was as stones in Jerusalem" no lesson was more necessary, and none would tell with deeper effect, than those powerful and touching declarations of the vanity of wealth and grandeur which are perhaps the most conspicuous feature in this book. The children of the First Covenant, always naturally disposed to form an exaggerated estimate of the blessing of earthly riches, might submit, even when that exaggeration was at its highest, to be corrected by the authority of their wealthiest king[1]. Farther, if the book appealed then, as it has ever since appealed, to an inner circle of more thoughtful readers, they especially who in those days discerned the signs of the approaching dismemberment of the kingdom and the diminution of the glory of Jerusalem would find their comfort in its lessons of patient endurance and resignation to the sovereign Will of God. Whenever the Church has been threatened with approaching calamity this book has always shewn its consolatory effect upon devout believers. Thus it was that Jerome tells us that he read it with Blæsilla specially to move her to contempt of the world: and in the same age Augustine refers to it as setting forth the vanity of this life, only that we may desire that life wherein, instead of vanity beneath the sun, there is truth under Him Who made the sun. It was the same tendency which, in another evil time, induced the author of 'De Imitatione Christi' to borrow from Ecclesiastes the key-note of his golden book. It has had the effect of soothing the ignominy of a captive king[1], and has pointed the moral of the fall of one[2] who wielded more than kingly power. It served, before Christ came, to lighten for Jews the darkness of those "crooked" ways of God which have exercised the Christian penetration of such master-minds as Pascal and Butler. It mitigates the desolation of religious doubt. Even to persons who would scarcely place themselves in the class of devout believers, to such as "the melancholy sceptical, inquiring spirits of our own age," Ecclesiastes brings a special message of consolation and direction: for it shews that a cry[3] of perplexity finds a place even in the sacred books; and it indicates a nearer approach to the living God in reverent worship (v. 1), in active service (xi. 6), in humble acknowledgment of His power (iii. 10—17), in reliance on His final justice (v. 8, xii. 13, 14), as the means by which that cry has been, and may again be, hushed.

[1] Compare the instruction which our Lord connects with the grandeur of Solomon, Matt. vi. 24—34.

[1] "Vanity of vanities," was the solitary exclamation of Gelimer when led in triumph through Constantinople. Gibbon, ch. XLI.

[2] See Chrysostom's first Homily on Eutropius. 'Works,' III. 381.

[3] See Dean Stanley's 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' Pt. II. Lect. 28.

ECCLESIASTES;

OR,

THE PREACHER.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The preacher sheweth that all human courses are vain: 4 because the creatures are restless in their courses, 9 they bring forth nothing new, and all old things are forgotten, 12 and because he hath found it so in the studies of wisdom.*

THE words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

2 [a] Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity.

[a] Ps. 39. 5, 6. & 62. 9. & 144. 4. chap. 12. 8.

CHAP. I. 1—3. These introductory verses serve to describe the writer, and to state the subject of his book: see Introduction.

1. *Preacher*] Literally, **Convener**. No one English word represents adequately the Hebrew *Koheleth*. Though capable, according to Hebrew usage, of being applied to men in office, it is strictly a feminine participle, and describes a person in the act of calling together an assembly of people as if with the intention of addressing them. The word thus understood refers us to the action of Wisdom personified, described in Proverbs i. 20, viii. 8, &c. In that book, as in Ecclesiastes, Solomon seems to support two characters, speaking sometimes in the third person as Wisdom instructing the assembled people, at other times in the first person. So our Lord speaks of Himself (compare Luke xi. 49 with Matt. xxiii. 34) as Wisdom, and as desiring (Luke xiii. 34) to gather the people together for instruction. It is unfortunate for the English reader that the word "Preacher" does not bring this personification before our minds, but a different idea.

2. *Vanity*] It is most important to understand this word (*Hebel*, or as it is spelt, when used as a proper name, in Gen. iv. 2, *Abel*), which occurs no less than thirty-seven times in Ecclesiastes, and has been called the key of the book. Primarily it means "breath," "light wind," as it should be translated in Isai. lvii. 13, &c. It denotes that which (1) passes away more or less quickly and completely, (2) leaves either no result or no adequate result behind, and therefore (3) fails to satisfy the mind of man, which naturally craves for something permanent and progressive: it is also applied to (4) idols, as contrasted with the Living, Eternal, and Almighty God, and thus in the Hebrew mind it is connected with sin. In this book it is applied to all works on earth, to pleasure, grandeur, wisdom, the life of man, childhood, youth, and length of days, the oblivion of the grave, wandering and unsatisfied desires, unenjoyed possessions, and anomalies in the moral government of the world.

Solomon speaks of the world-wide existence of vanity, not with bitterness or scorn, but as a fact, which forced itself on him as he advanced in knowledge of men and things, and which he regards with sorrow and perplexity. From such feelings he finds refuge by contrasting this with another fact, which he holds with equal firmness, viz. that the whole universe is made and is governed by a God of justice, goodness, and power. How vanity came to exist in such a world is seemingly beyond the sphere of Solomon's knowledge, unless the answer may be indicated in vii. 29. But the place of vanity in the order of Divine Providence is explained to us by St Paul, Romans viii., where its origin is traced to the subjugation and corruption of creation by Sin as a consequence of the fall of man; and its extinction is declared to be reserved till after the Resurrection in the glory and liberty of the children of God.

Vanity of vanities] A well-known Hebrew idiom signifying vanity in the highest degree. Compare the phrase, "Holy of holies."

all] It is evident from verses 4—11 that

[b] chap. 2. 11. & 3. 9.

3 [b] What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

4 *One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: [c] but the earth abideth for ever.

[c] Ps. 104. 5. & 119. 90.

5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and † hasteth to his place where he arose.

† Heb. *panteth.*

6 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

7 [d] All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they † return again.

[d] Job 38. 10. Ps. 104. 8, 9.

† Heb. *return to go*

8 All things *are* full of labour; man cannot utter *it*: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 [e] The thing that hath been, it *is* *that* which shall be; and that which is done *is* that which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun.

[e] chap. 3. 15.

10 Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

11 *There is* no remembrance of

Solomon includes in this word both the courses of nature and the works of man; just as St Paul (Rom. viii. 22) describes the *whole* creation as travailing together and subject to vanity.

3. *What profit*, &c.] The question here stated in this verse is substantially the same as is referred to in ii. 3, 22, iii. 9, v. 16, vi. 11, &c.; it is the great practical inquiry of the book, and receives its final answer in xii. 13, 14. When this question was asked (Rupert of Deutz observes) the Lord had not yet said, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

profit] This word occurs with remarkable frequency in Ecclesiastes, and always in the sense of *profit*, or *preeminence*. It is therefore opposed to *vanity*. Its derivation is from a word signifying to hang over, overflow, abound, remain over and above.

hath a man] Rather, **hath man.**

4—11. Vanity is shewn in mankind, the elements and all that moves on earth, each in its own circle, in which the same course is repeated again and again without any permanent result or real progress; and events and men are alike forgotten.

4. *abideth*] The apparent permanence of the earth increases by contrast the transitory condition of its inhabitants.

for ever] The word *olam* here translated "ever" does not absolutely signify "eternity." That would doubtless be its meaning if *e.g.* it were applied to God, as in Deut. xxxii. 40: but it is often used to denote a certainly short period, as in Exod. xxi. 6. Here it might be paraphrased "as long as this world, this present order of things, lasts." Compare notes on iii. 11 and xii. 5.

5. *hasteth*] Lit. **at his place panting** (= eager; compare "rejoicing," Ps. xix. 5) **riseth he there.**

6. The rhythm and meaning of this verse are slightly impaired by the translation of the same Hebrew word by four different English words. It might be more literally translated, **Going towards the south and veering towards the north, veering, veering goes the wind; and to its veerings the wind returns.**

7. *the place*] *i.e.* the spring or river-head. Solomon does not tell us in what way he supposes the water of the rivers to return to the spring. Judging from such passages as Prov. viii. 28, and Ps. civ. 10, 13, it would seem that the ancient Hebrews regarded the clouds as the immediate feeders of the springs. It would be too much to infer from Gen. ii. 6 that they were distinctly acquainted with the process and result of evaporation. The notion that the rivers return by subterraneous channels from the ocean to the river-head is found in the Targum here, but not in the sacred text.

8. *All things...utter it*] This clause, as here translated, gives a good sense as a general statement of that restless activity of man and the powers of nature of which four specific instances have been given (4—7). Another translation, which however does not materially affect the sense, and savours of tautology, is preferred by some scholars. The word translated *things* (Vulgate, A.V., Vaihinger, Rosenm., Herzfeld, Grätz) may be rendered "words" (Sept., Ewald, Hitzig); and "are full of labour" may be rendered either actively (Knobel, Zöckler) "make weary" the hearers, or passively (Gesenius, Elster, Ginsburg) "are exhausted, feeble," or "insufficient" to tell the whole. Thus translated the clause would refer not directly to the immensity of the labour, but to the impossibility of adequately describing it.

9. *hath been...is done*] *i.e.* hath happened in the course of nature...is done by man.

former *things*; neither shall there be *any* remembrance of *things* that are to come with *those* that shall come after.

12 ¶ I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all *things* that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man [1]to be exercised therewith.

[1] Or, *to afflict them.*

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

15 [f]*That which is* crooked cannot be made straight: and [†]that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

[f] chap. 7. 13.

[†] Heb. *defect.*

16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten [g]more wisdom than all *they* that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart [†]had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

[g] 1 Kin. 4. 30. & 10. 7, 23.

[†] Heb. *had seen much.*

17 [h]And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

[h] chap. 2. 12. & 7. 23.

18 For in much wisdom *is* much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

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11. *things*] Rather, **men.** So the Targum, Knobel and others.

12. Hitherto we have heard Wisdom, in highly poetic language, declaring generally the vanity of all things. Now, Solomon begins in less rhythmical language to relate his personal experience, which is continued to the end of the second chapter. Beginning with the time of his accession to the throne, when the gifts of wisdom and riches were specially promised to him (1 K. iii. 12, 13), he relates the anxious efforts which he made, with his unprecedented resources, to advance wisdom, pleasure, grandeur, and every personal gratification, and how the result of his experience was "no profit," and a conviction that all, even God's gifts of earthly good to good men, in this life are subject to vanity. His trial of his first gift, wisdom, is recounted in *vv.* 12—18.

was] This tense does not imply that Solomon had ceased to be king when the word was written. "The preterite is very frequently used in describing a past which reaches forward into the present." Hengstenberg, so Grätz, and see Hitzig on iii. 15. See Introduction, p. 623. The same tense is used in a parallel text, vii. 15, "All this have I seen in the days of my vanity."

13. *wisdom*] Wisdom, Solomon's first gift, seems to include both the powers of observation and judgment, and the knowledge acquired thereby (1 K. iii. 28, iv. 29, x. 8, &c.). It increases by exercise. In these verses we have the account of its application to men and their actions, as is implied in the word "done."

travail] The word travail is always used in this book in the sense of toil. Here it is applied to all human occupations, as in iii. 10. To restrict it to the exercise and acquisition of wisdom is not necessary.

God] See Note at end of Chapter.

14. *vexation of spirit*] Otherwise translated, **feeding on wind.** See Note at the end of the Chapter.

15. His investigation enabled him to see more clearly both the disorder and incompleteness of human actions (and, as it appears to man, of the course of events, vii. 13, which God allows to happen in this world) and also man's impotence to rectify them.

16. *I am come...wisdom than*] Rather, **I have accumulated** (lit. "enlarged and added") **wisdom more than.**

they that have been, &c.] The reference is probably to the line of Canaanitish kings who lived in Jerusalem before David took it, of whom the names of Melchizedek (Gen. xiv. 18), Adonizedek (Josh. x. 1), and Araunah (2 S. xxiv. 23), are known to us; or, it may be, to Solomon's contemporaries of his own country (1 K. iv. 31) and of other countries who visited him (1 K. iv. 34, and x. 24). The preposition "in" Jerusalem should be translated **over.** See Introduction, p. 623.

17. *to know madness and folly*] The question will be asked, Why should he have sought to know them? It has been answered that things are understood by their contraries; and thus a knowledge of folly would help him to discern wisdom, and to exercise that chief function of practical wisdom—to avoid folly.

18. Bp. Butler, 'Serm.' xv., explains this verse to this effect. We become more sensible of our ignorance and impotence, and therefore sorrowful, in proportion as we discover more of the constitution of nature and the scheme of Providence in the government of the world; every discovery serving to convince us that more remains concealed of which we had no suspicion before.

This verse is the subject of an acute and exhaustive sermon by Dr South, Vol. v. p. 1.

NOTES on CHAP. I. 13, 14.

13. ON THE NAME OF GOD IN ECCLESIASTES. Thirty-nine times in this book, God is named as Elohim; which was common to the true God and to false gods, and was used by believers and by idolaters: but the name Jehovah, by which He is known peculiarly to the people who are in covenant with Him, is never once used.

Perhaps the chief reason for this is that the evil which is the object of inquiry in this book is not at all peculiar to the chosen people. The whole human race, all creation (Rom. viii.), groans under it. Both the partial explanation given of it in this book, viz. the disharmony between God's will and man's will, and the advice founded on that explanation, were, in the time of the old dispensation, capable of being understood and practised almost equally by persons without the Covenant as by Israelites. Though the Preacher's reasoning would come home with more convincing force to a believing Jew, yet it would meet with a response from the heart of many a pious and thoughtful heathen. He does not write of, or to, the Hebrew race exclusively. There is no express and obvious reference to their national expectations, the events of their national history, or even to the divine oracles which were deposited with them.

It was natural for the wisest and largest-hearted man of his race to take a wider range of observation than any other Hebrew writer before or after him. It became the sovereign of many peoples whose religions diverged more or less remotely from the true religion, to address himself to a more extensive sphere than that which was occupied by the Twelve Tribes, and to adapt his language accordingly.

There is at least one passage, v. 1, in which a reference is made apparently to the temple. Here we should have expected the feelings of an ordinary devout Hebrew writer to lead him at once to the recognition of God by the name of Jehovah as the Lord of the Covenant. But an additional reason for abstaining from the use of that name here will occur to those readers who accept this book as the work of Solomon after his fall into idolatry. To them it will appear a natural sign of the writer's self-humiliation, an acknowledgment of his unworthiness of the privileges of a son of the Covenant.

14. "Vexation of spirit." This phrase occurs seven times (ii. 11, 17, 26, iv. 4, 6, and vi. 9), whence it has become a household word among us; but it is very doubtful whether it can be retained as a translation of רעות רוח. Of course רוח may signify either the wind or the spirit: the question is as to the meaning of רעות. Three translations of the phrase have been suggested: (1) "Vexation of spirit" (Vulgate, Syriac, Chaldee, Jarchi). The signification of "vexation" is attributed to רעות on the supposition that it could be derived from רעע "to break;" a derivation which modern grammarians (see Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Ginsburg) reject as contrary to analogy, asserting that it must be derived from רעה "to feed," "follow," "strive after." This being admitted, it remains to choose between two translations. (2) "Striving after wind," or "windy effort." This derives some sanction from the Septuagint προαίρεσις πνεύματος, and is accepted by the majority of modern interpreters, Gesen., Rosenm., Ewald, Knobel, Vaihinger, Zöckler, Ginsburg, Grätz, &c. But as the primary meaning of רעה is "to feed," another translation, (3) **feeding on wind**, seems preferable. It is adopted by Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, Van der Palm and Döderlein. It is moreover the translation of nearly the same phrase in our Authorized Version of Hos. xii. 1. There are also similar instances of such use of the verb רעה; the fool feeds on foolishness, Prov. xv. 14; the idolater feeds on ashes, Isai. xliv. 20; and the faithful man is exhorted to feed on truth, Ps. xxxvii. 3.

CHAPTER II.

1 *The vanity of human courses in the works of pleasure.* 12 *Though the wise be better than the fool, yet both have one event.* 18 *The vanity of human labour, in leaving it they know not to whom.* 24 *Nothing better than joy in our labour; but that is God's gift.*

I SAID in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also *is* vanity.

2 I said of laughter, *It is* mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?

CHAP. II. 1—11. Having stated his experience of the vanity of wisdom, Solomon now relates how he pursued his investigation with his second gift, viz. riches, and the enjoyments which riches supply; and how this brought him to the same result.

The course of action pursued by him in this chapter has been compared with that of the rich man in our Lord's parable (Luke xii. 16—21). But it must be remembered that Solomon's object was the acquisition of wisdom, not self-indulgence, and that he did not fail to look forward to the certainty of death overtaking him.

[a] chap. 1. 17. † Heb. *to draw my flesh with wine.* 3 [a]I sought in mine heart †to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven †all the days of their life. † Heb. *the number of the days of their life.*

4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

5 I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind of* fruits:

6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7 I got *me* servants and maidens, and had †servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: † Heb. *sons of my house.*

8 [b]I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, *as* [b] 1 Kin. 9. 28. & 10. 14.

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3. *I sought...wisdom*] Rather, **I resolved** (lit. "I turned in my heart") **to draw my flesh with wine (my heart guiding me with wisdom)**. From i. 13 to the end of this chapter he is relating his attempt to find something which should answer the question i. 3, something exempt from vanity and really "good for the sons of men." Here (ii. 3) he says that in the course of this attempt, whilst his heart was directing him (as a charioteer directs his horses or a shepherd his sheep) with wisdom, and whilst he was following that guidance, he determined to draw on with him his flesh by wine, thus making his flesh, which he speaks of as distinct from himself, a confederate and subsidiary in his attempt. So in Rom. vii. 25 the Apostle speaks of the mind, the flesh, and himself, as if they were three distinct personalities. The word translated "draw" is so rendered in Isai. v. 18; Hos. xi. 4, and elsewhere. Knobel renders it "hold fast;" Gesenius, "strengthen;" Herzfeld, "allure." The ancient versions afford no help. Jerome explains it, "to draw on life with delights, and to cast asleep with pleasure as with wine my flesh free from all cares."

good] This inquiry was heard in Judea even before the time of Solomon, if as is generally believed Ps. iv. 6 was written by David.

4. Compare with this and the following six verses the account of Solomon's buildings and magnificence in 1 K. vii. 1—12, ix. 15—19, x. 14—27, and 2 Chro. viii. 4.

vineyards] Compare the references to Solomon's vineyards, Song of Sol. viii. 11, and to David's, 1 Chro. xxvii. 27.

5. *orchards*] The word is "paradises," *i.e.* parks or pleasure-grounds: it occurs in Song of Sol. iv. 13, and Neh. ii. 8; where see notes on the derivation. Indications of at least three of these are pointed out by Dean Stanley ('Jewish Church,' II. 26). One at Jerusalem near the pool of Siloam, called "the king's garden," Neh. iii. 15; Jer. lii. 7; a second near Bethlehem, to which the next verse seems to refer particularly; and a third in the remote north, on the heights of Hermon, Song of Sol. iv. 8, viii. 11.

6. *pools*] A short distance south of Bethlehem, in a valley in the green winding defile of Urtas, three "Pools of Solomon" are still shewn, and an adjoining hill still bears the name of the "Little Paradise." Josephus is probably not indebted merely to his imagination for the description which he gives of king Solomon going in the early morning from Jerusalem into the country to a place called Etham about 8 miles distant, a fertile region, delightful with paradises and running springs. Thither the king, in robes of white, rode in his chariot, escorted by a troop of mounted archers, chosen for their youth and stature, and clad in Tyrian purple, whose long hair, powdered daily with gold dust, sparkled in the sun ('Antiquities,' VIII. 7, § 3). It will be remembered that the rock Etam, and its springs, are famous in the history of Samson, Judg. xv.

7. *I got*] Rather, **I bought**, in distinction to those who were born in the house, and are mentioned afterwards. The "children of Solomon's servants," who were sufficiently numerous to return as a distinct class from the captivity, Ezra ii. 55, 58, were more probably those of Canaanitish origin (1 K. ix. 20, 21 and v. 15) than the Hebrews (1 K. ix. 22).

possessions of great and small cattle] Rather, **herds of oxen and sheep.**

all...before me] King David's herds and flocks are mentioned in 1 Chro. xxvii. 29, 31: but we have no specific account of the wealth of other Canaanitish or Hebrew inhabitants of Jerusalem before Solomon. See Introduction, p. 623.

8. *kings*] Both tributary 1 K. x. 15, and independent 1 K. v. 1, ix. 14, x. 2: the "provinces" probably correspond to the kingdoms mentioned in 1 K. iv. 21.

singers] These are recorded as among the luxuries of David's court, 2 S. xix. 35.

as musical...sorts] **Many women** (lit. "bosoms"). See Note at the end of this

† musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

Heb. *musical instrument and instruments.*

9 So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all *was* [c] vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun.

[c] chap. 1. 3

12 ¶ And I turned myself to behold wisdom, [d] and madness, and folly: for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the king? ‖ *even* that which hath been already done.

[d] chap. 1. 17. & 7. 25.

‖ Or, *in those things which have been already done.*

13 Then I saw † that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

† Heb. *that there is an excellency in wisdom more than in folly,* &c.

14 [e] The wise man's eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.

[e] Prov. 17. 24. chap. 8. 1.

15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it † happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also *is* vanity.

† Heb. *happeneth to me, even to me.*

16 For *there is* no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now *is* in

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Chapter, and compare the account of Solomon's wives and concubines, 1 K. xi. 1—3.

10. *portion*] This word occurs again in ii. 21, iii. 22, v. 18, 19, ix. 9, &c. In other books it is used to describe a warrior's share of the spoils taken in war (Gen. xiv. 24), or a priest's portion of the offerings (Lev. vi. 17). It is much less extensive in its signification than the word "profit" (i. 3). The pleasure which Solomon found in the act of working, here and in iii. 22, and ix. 9, described as a portion, and also perhaps the pleasure felt in the process of acquiring wisdom, i. 13, ii. 13, 14, is admitted to be good, if received from God, ii. 26, v. 18; compare 1 Tim. iv. 4. But such pleasure being transitory is subject to vanity, and therefore does not afford a sufficient answer to the repeated question, "What profit hath a man?" i. 3.

12—26. Having made proof severally of wisdom and folly, and having found that both agree in being subject to vanity, Solomon now contrasts one with the other (13). Both are brought under vanity by events (14) which come on the wise man and the fool alike from without—death and oblivion (16), uncertainty (19), disappointment (21)—all happening by an external law beyond human control. Amidst this vanity, the good, or portion (see note on *v.* 10), that accrues to man, is the pleasure which is felt (24—26) in receiving God's gifts, and in working with and for them.

12. *what can the man do...already done*] Our Authorized Version substantially agrees with the translation of the present text by Ibn Ezra (quoted by Dr Ginsburg), Mendelssohn, Rosenmüller, Knobel and others; and the text thus understood admits of this explanation: "What is any man that in this study of wisdom and folly shall come after me, who, from my position, have had such peculiar advantages (see i. 16, and compare ii. 25) for carrying it on? That which man did of old he can but do again: he is not likely to add to the result of my researches, nor even to equal them." Vaihinger and Ginsburg object, with some reason, to the insertion of the words "can do" in the first clause: they hold the improbable opinion that the "man" is a reference to Solomon's successor—not in his inquiries, but in his kingdom, *i.e.* Jeroboam. The Septuagint, Vulgate and Chaldee give no assistance in translating the present text.

14. *event*] Or, "hap," as the word is translated in Ruth ii. 3. It occurs in Eccles. ii. 14, 15, iii. 19, and ix. 2, 3. The verb from which it is derived signifies to meet, occur, befall. It is applicable to any accidental circumstance: but it seems in Ecclesiastes to refer specially to death Herzfeld observes that it is evident, from ix. 1 and 2, that this word does not mean chance, independent of the ordering of Divine Providence. Indeed, the Gentile notion of "mere chance," or "blind fate," is never once contemplated by the writer of this book, and it would be inconsistent with his tenets of the unlimited power and activity of God. Chap. iii. 1—15, vii. 13, xi. 5, &c.

16. *seeing that...forgotten*] This clause has substantially the same meaning as i. 11, but the exact translation is disputed. Ibn Ezra, Ginsburg, and probably the Septuagint, render, "as in time past, so in days to come, all will be forgotten." Gesenius, Knobel

the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise *man?* as the fool.

17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun *is* grievous unto me: for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 ¶ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had † taken under the sun: because *f* I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

† Heb. *laboured.* *f* Ps. 49. 10.

19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

21 For there is a man whose labour *is* in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he † leave it *for* his portion. This also *is* vanity and a great evil.

† Heb. *give.*

22 *g* For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

g chap. 1. 3. & 3. 9.

23 For all his days *are* *h* sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

h Job 14. 1.

24 ¶ *i* *There is* nothing better for a man, *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he ‖ should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it *was* from the hand of God.

i chap. 3. 12, 13, 22. & 5. 18. & 8. 15. ‖ Or, *delight his senses.*

25 For who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I?

26 For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good † in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that *k* he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

† Heb. *before him.* *k* Job 27. 17.

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and others, render, "because in the days to come all will have been long before forgotten."

how] Rather, **oh! how.**

17. *I hated life*] This expression, extorted from Solomon by the perception of the vanity of his wisdom and greatness, may be compared with St Paul's emphatic words, Rom. viii. 22, 23, in view of the subjection of creation to vanity. The words of Moses, Num. xi. 15, and of Job, iii. 21, vi. 9, are scarcely less forcible. Hengstenberg observes that this feeling is with some men a powerful motive to conversion (Luke xiv. 26).

18. *the man*] His successor, whosoever he might be: comp. *v.* 12.

19. *labour*] Referring to ii. 4—8.

20. *I went about*] *i.e.* I turned from one course of action to another. A different expression from "I turned," *v.* 12, and more emphatic.

23. *are sorrows ... grief*] Rather, **sorrows and grief are his toil.** See i. 13.

24. *nothing better for a man, than that*] Lit. **no good in man that.** That "portion in all his labour" (see *v.* 10), the pleasure experienced in the act of working or receiving, the one joy which, though it be transitory, he recognizes as a real (comp. v. 18 and note vii. 3) good, even that is not in the power of man to secure for himself: that good is the gift of God. This translation is accepted by the Septuagint, Rosenmüller, Knobel and others. The translation in our A.V., though sanctioned by Jerome (in his commentary), the Targum, Ewald, Vaihinger, Ginsburg and others, would require either an addition to the text or a harsh ellipsis.

25. Here, as in *v.* 12, Solomon appeals to his own experience as conclusive, by reason of his superior advantages. This verse may be read as a parenthesis.

26. The doctrine of Retribution, or, the revealed fact that God is the moral Governor of the world, is here stated for the first time (comp. iii. 15, 17, &c.) in this book.

This also is vanity] There is no reason to restrict the reference of "this" to the travail of the sinner: for even wisdom, knowledge, and joy, have been declared previously to be subject to vanity. Even the best gifts of God, so far as they are given in this life "beneath the sun," are not permanent, and are not always (see ix. 11) efficacious for the purpose for which they appear to us to be given. Comp. Augustine, 'Conf.' I. 1. "Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it repose in Thee."

NOTE on CHAP. II. 8.

musical instruments, and that of all sorts] The words שדה ושדות, which occur here only, have been translated in various ways. Ancient interpreters, deriving the word either (1) from שדא, "to pour out" (Septuagint, Aquila, Chaldee, Vulgate), or else (2) from שדד, "to ravish with music" (Syriac Version, Kimchi), understood it to mean either (1) "cups," or "cupbearers," or (2) "instruments of music," or "musicians." But there is another interpretation which seems preferable. Ibn Ezra (quoted by Ginsburg), Mendelssohn, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Knobel, Hitzig, Vaihinger, and others, though differing as to its derivation, concur in giving it the meaning of "concubines" or "wives." This signification of the word and its derivation from שד, "breast" (Rosenmüller, Ginsburg, Tayler Lewis) are strongly supported by a kindred passage, Song of Sol. vii. 6, 7, where as here תענוגים, "delights," and שדים, "breasts," are connected together. This interpretation of the passage would agree with the historical statement in 1 K. xi. 1.

The repetition of the word, first in the singular, then in the plural, is generally taken by modern grammarians to imply (as in Judg. v. 30) multitude, rather than different sorts.

Ewald and others mentioned by Heiligstedt and Rödiger derive the word from an Arabic word signifying "a heap," or "plenty;" and translate the phrase "heap on heaps," or "in great abundance."

CHAPTER III.

1 By the necessary change of times, vanity is added to human travail. 11 There is an excellency in God's works. 16 But as for man, God shall judge his works there, and here he shall be like a beast.

TO every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

2 A time † to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted;

† Heb. *to bear.*

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

CHAP. III. 1—15. There is in this chapter a transition from Solomon's personal experience of life to that of mankind generally; but it is closely connected with the preceding chapter. There (*v.* 26) he contemplated the different conditions of two men each leading an active life. The works of the first, through God's ordinance, bring him a portion of happiness; but the works of the second are not beneficial to the doer. It follows that the works of men are subject in their results to another will besides that of the doer, or, are under the control of God. Here we have in fact the germ of the great question of later times—how to reconcile man's freewill with God's decrees. Solomon's way of stating it is that to every separate work, which goes to make up the great aggregate of human activity (=the "travail," i. 13, iii. 10), there is a season, an appropriate time which God appoints for its being done, iii. 1—8. To the question (9) What profit has man the worker therein? he answers that the works of men, if done according to God's appointment, are a part of the work that God maketh (11), that beautifully arranged scheme of Divine Providence which, as a whole, is, by reason of its extent and duration, incomprehensible to us, notwithstanding our far-reaching aspirations, and the power of looking before and after which God gives us (11). Man's good is to rejoice and do good in his lifetime, which he can do only as God appoints (12, 13). God's work, of which this would be a part, is for ever and is perfect (and so not subject to vanity), and calculated to teach men to fear Him (14). His work, which was begun long ago, is now going on to completion; His work hereafter will be a complement of something which was done previously; and He recals the past in order to add to it what shall make it complete and perfect (15). The principle of divine government—that every work in order to be permanent and successful must be God's work as well as man's work—is declared in Ps. cxxvii. 1, 2 (attributed to Solomon) quite as plainly as in this chapter.

1. *every thing*] The Hebrew word is quite capable of this unlimited meaning; but it is evident from the following specification that Solomon had in view particularly the actions of men and events which happen to men, the world of Providence rather than the world of creation. It would seem that most of his own works described in ii. 1—8 were present to his mind. The rare word translated "season," which occurs elsewhere in Neh. ii. 6, and Esth. ix. 27, 31, means emphatically fitting time.

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time † to refrain from embracing;

† Heb. *to be far from.*

6 A time to ‖ get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

‖ Or, *seek.*

7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

9 [a] What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

[a] chap. 1. 3.

10 I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

11 He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

12 I know that *there is* no good in them, but for *a man* to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

13 And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it *is* the gift of God.

14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before him.

15 [b] That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth † that which is past.

[b] chap. 1. 9.

† Heb. *that which is driven away.*

16 ¶ And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, *that* wickedness *was* there; and the place of righteousness, *that* iniquity *was* there.

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5. *stones*] Stones may be regarded either as materials for building, or as impediments to the fertility of land. See 2 K. iii. 19, 25, and Isai. v. 2. This clause must not be interpreted to mean the same as the last clause of *v.* 3.

6. *get...lose*] Rather, **seek, and a time to give up for lost.**

7. *rend*] *i.e.* tear garments in sign of mourning or anger. See 2 S. i. 2, 11, &c.

9. See note on i. 3. After reviewing the works of man in a new light, namely, as works ordained by God, and parts of His great design, he repeats his question.

11. Rather, **He hath made all** [the travail, *v.* 10] **beautiful in its time; also He hath set eternity in their heart** (*i.e.* the heart of the sons of men, *v.* 10). "Everything," as in *v.* 1, refers to the acts of men rather than to other things: "beautiful" is used in the sense of convenient, fit, in harmony with the whole work of God: the archaic "his" for "its" obscures the meaning. To set eternity in their heart means to give them the faculty of considering and being moved by the past and the future. See Note at the end of the Chapter.

so...find] *i.e.* without enabling man to find. So Knobel and others. Compare vii. 13, viii. 17.

12. *in them*] *i.e.* in the sons of men; compare the same expression in ii. 24.

to do good] This is understood by some interpreters (Ibn Ezra, quoted by Ginsburg, Luther, Knobel, Gesenius, Ginsburg and others) as meaning physical enjoyment. But physical enjoyment is referred to in the next verse. It is certainly better to understand these words in the moral sense which they bear in all other places, and which is here understood by the Sept., Vulg., Targum, Rosenmüller, Vaihinger, Zöckler, &c.

14. The last clause of this verse goes beyond a declaration of the fact of God's government of the world (ii. 26, &c.) by adding the moral effect which that fact is calculated to produce on those who see it. It is the first indication of the practical conclusion, xii. 13, of the book.

15. Rather, **What has been—that** *was* **before, and that which shall be has been before.** The word "is" in our A.V. is erroneously printed in Roman letters: it does not exist in the Hebrew; and the word there translated "now" is the same which is translated "already."

requireth] *i.e.* requireth for judgment, as the word specially means in 2 S. iv. 11; Ezek. iii. 18, &c. It is obvious from the context in the last clause of *v.* 14, and *vv.* 16, 17, that this is the meaning here.

past] Lit. "put to flight."

The meaning of the verse is that there is a connection between events, past, present [implied in the Hebrew preterite: see Hitzig], and future, and that this connection exists in the justice of God Who controls all.

16—22. That great anomaly in the moral government of this world, the seemingly unequal distribution of rewards and punish-

17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for *there is* [c] a time there for every purpose and for every work.

18 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, [1] that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

19 [d] For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all *is* vanity.

20 All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

21 Who knoweth the spirit [†] of man that [†] goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22 [e] Wherefore I perceive that *there is* nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that *is* his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

ver. 1.

Or, *that they might clear God, and see*, &c.

Ps. 49.

chap. 2.

† Heb. *of the sons of man*.

† Heb. *is ascending*.

e chap. 2. 24. & 5. 18.

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ments, will be rectified by God, Who has future times and events under His control (16, 17). As for men, they are placed by God, Who is their teacher, in a humble condition, even on a level with inferior animals, by death, that great instance of their subjection to vanity (18, 19), which reduces to its original form all that was made of the dust of the ground (20). And though the destinies of man and beast are different, yet in our present want of knowledge as to God's future dealing with our spirits (21), man finds his portion (as has been said already ii. 10, and note) in such labour and such joy as God assigns to him in his lifetime (22).

16. *I saw*, &c.] Rather, **I have seen** (as in *v.* 10) **under the sun the place**, &c. The place of judgment means the seat of the authorized judge. Compare "the holy place," viii. 10.

17. *a time there*] *i.e.* a time with God. Hengstenberg compares Gen. xlix. 24.

18. Lit. **I said in my heart with regard to the sons of men, *it is* that God may prove them and shew them that they are beasts, they themselves.** "Shewing" is the reading of the Sept., Vulg., and Syriac: the present Hebrew text reads "seeing." The meaning is that the long delay of God's judgment (*vv.* 16, 17) is calculated to shew men that the brevity of their life renders them incapable of following out and understanding His distributive justice.

19. *that which befalleth the sons of men*] Lit. the event or hap of the sons of men, *i.e.* that which comes upon them from without, in virtue of the ordinance of God. See note on this word, ii. 14. Death in particular (*vv.* 2, 11) is a part of the "work that God doeth."

21. The A.V. of this verse is the only rendering which the Hebrew text, as now pointed, allows (see Hengstenberg, and Professor Tayler Lewis). It is in accordance with Ibn Ezra (in Ginsburg), and the best Jewish interpreters, with Rosenmüller, Preston, Hengstenberg, Delitzsch and others. A slightly different pointing would be requisite to authorize the translation, "Who knows the spirit of the sons of man whether it goes above, and the spirit of the beast whether it goes down below?" &c., which, though it seems neither necessary nor suitable, is sanctioned by the Septuagint, Vulgate, Targum, Syriac, Knobel, Ewald, Hitzig, Vaihinger, Ginsburg, and others.

Who knoweth] This expression (used also ii. 19, vi. 12) does not necessarily imply complete and absolute ignorance. In Ps. xc. 11, it is applied to that which is partially understood: compare similar forms of expression, Prov. xxxi. 10; Ps. xciv. 16; Isai. liii. 1. Moreover it is evident from xii. 7 that Solomon did not doubt the future existence and destination of the soul. This verse can only be construed as a confession of much ignorance on the subject.

22. *what shall be after him*] *i.e.* what shall become of the results of his work after he is dead. Compare ii. 19, vi. 12.

NOTE on CHAP. III. 11.

The word "eternity" is used in our A.V. only as an attribute of God, and therefore in its strict metaphysical sense. I have ventured to use it here as the best English equivalent for the substantive עולם, in that less strict sense in which the adjective "everlasting" is often used in our A.V. The word עולם is derived from a root originally signifying "he concealed;" and in all places where it occurs in the Old Testament it has reference to time. Its general meaning is a long period of time, the beginning or end of which is uncertain, or

at least undefined: though sometimes the period is not of great length, as when it is applied to the lifetime of a slave, Exod. xxi. 6, &c. The word is used seven times in Ecclesiastes. In i. 4, it is rendered "for ever" and means "continually," outlasting the passing generations of mankind, a period without defined end or beginning. In i. 10, it is rendered "of old time," and refers to ages which have come to an end, the beginning of which is not defined. In ii. 16, iii. 14, ix. 6, it is rendered "for ever," and is applied to a period of which the beginning is certain but the end is not defined. In xii. 5, it is rendered "long," and is applied, in the same sense as the last, to the state of man after death.

In the present passage, iii. 11, interpreters are divided between two meanings. (*a*) "Eternity," not as metaphysically conceived but in the sense of a long indefinite period of time, in accordance with the use of the word throughout this book, and the rest of the Old Testament. This meaning is adopted by the Septuagint (*αἰῶν*), Aquila, Drusius ("tempus vitæ humanæ"), Rosenmüller, Vaihinger, Hengstenberg, Ginsburg, Delitzsch, Wordsworth, Zöckler. Its connection with the context is thus explained. Gregory of Nyssa says: "Eternity, being a notion connected as it were with 'interval' (*αἰὼν διαστηματικόν τι νόημα ὄν*), signifies the entire creation which comes to be in it. The word [by metonymy], from that which includes, means that which is included therein. All things then which have come to be in eternity (*τῷ αἰῶνι*) God has given to the heart of man for good, so that, through the greatness and beauty of the things created, man may contemplate Him Who made them." The explanations of Döderlein and Delitzsch are even more closely confined, I think, to the immediate meaning of the text. Döderlein (quoted by Rosenmüller) says, "In all the vicissitudes of the world, the wise ordering of God is conspicuous; and often, if a man uses the faculty divinely impressed on his mind of thoroughly considering a long interval of time (=עולם), of reviewing past and forecasting future events, he may gain a knowledge of the beauty and grandeur of the divine government: yet we are in no wise gifted with so large an extent of knowledge as would enable us at one glance to form an idea and plan of the vast order of Providence." Delitzsch ('Biblical Psychology,' VI. § 2, p. 475, Eng. tr.) says, "God has placed in the inborn constitution of man the capability of conceiving of eternity, the struggle to apprehend the everlasting, the longing after an eternal life."

The other meaning (*b*) "the world," *i.e.* the material world, or universe, in which we dwell, is accepted by the Vulgate and Jerome, Mendelssohn, Gesenius, Knobel, Ewald, and Elster: and it has gained currency in England by being received in our A.V., and by being commented on by Lord Bacon in the beginning of the first book of the 'Advancement of Learning' ('Works,' by Ellis and Spedding, III. 265). With this meaning the context is explained as referring either to the knowledge of the objects with which this world is filled, or to the love of the pleasures of the world. This meaning seems to be less in harmony with the context than the other: but the principal objection to it is that it assigns to the word עולם a sense which, although found in Rabbinical Hebrew, it never bears in the language of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Vanity is increased unto men by oppression,* 4 *by envy,* 5 *by idleness,* 7 *by covetousness,* 9 *by solitariness,* 13 *by wilfulness.*

SO I returned, and considered all the [a] oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of *such as were* oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the † side of their oppressors *there was* power; but they had no comforter.

2 [b] Wherefore I praised the dead

[a] chap. 5. 8.
† Heb. *hand.*
[b] Job 3. 17, &c.

CHAP. IV. Having arrived in iii. 22 at a partial answer to his question, iii. 9, and i. 3; viz. that there is positive good (=a portion) in that satisfaction which is found in working, Solomon now turns to the case of such happiness being interrupted and reduced to vanity by various contingencies—by oppression, 1—3; by envy, 4—6; by loneliness, 7—12; by decay of working power, 13—16; the first two instances seem taken from the lower ranks of life, the last two from the higher.

1. *So I returned, and considered*] Rather, **And I returned and saw.** After pursuing in the preceding verses his reflections on certain phenomena of life, he turns to look again on other phenomena, and to test by them his previous conclusion.

oppressions...oppressed] The word is the same in Hebrew. It has been proposed, instead of "all the oppressions that are done," to translate "all the oppressed that are made," *i.e.* all who are brought under oppression. The concrete word is more striking than the abstract: but the idiom is harsh in Hebrew as in English. (See Note at end of Chapter.)

which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

[c] Job 3. 11, 16, 21.

3 [c] Yea, better *is he* than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

4 ¶ Again, I considered all travail, and [1] every right work, that [1] for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

[1] Heb. *all the rightness of work.*
[1] Heb. *this is the envy of a man from his neighbour.*

5 [d] The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

[d] Prov. 6. 10. & 24. 33.

6 [e] Better *is* an handful *with* quietness, than both the hands full *with* travail and vexation of spirit.

[e] Prov. 15. 16. & 16. 8.

7 ¶ Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There is one *alone*, and *there is* not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet *is there* no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither *saith he*, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This *is* also vanity, yea, it *is* a sore travail.

9 ¶ Two *are* better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm *alone?*

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 ¶ Better *is* a poor and a wise

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3. *better is he...which hath not yet been*] This vehement expression is not without parallel in this book—vi. 3, and elsewhere, as Job iii. 10, x. 18; Jer. xx. 14; Matt. xxvi. 24.

4. *every right work*] Rather, **every success in work.**

for this...neighbour] Lit. "this is the envy of man for his neighbour," *i.e.* "this successful work makes the worker an object of envy." So Gesenius and Vaihinger in substantial accordance with our A.V., the Vulgate and Luther. Many modern interpreters understand the meaning to be "this work is the effect of the rivalry of man with his neighbour."

5. *foldeth his hands*] The envious man is here exhibited in the characteristic attitude of the sluggard, Prov. vi. 10, xxiv. 33, whose tendency to neglect even his food is noticed in Prov. xii. 27, xix. 24, and may help to explain the phrase "eateth his own flesh," *i.e.* "destroys himself:" comp. a similar expression Isai. xlix. 26; Ps. xxvii. 2; and Mic. iii. 3.

6. *handful*] Strictly, what fills the hollow of a hand.

both the hands full] Lit. "both fists full."

This verse may be understood either (1) as uttered by the fool as a sarcasm on his successful but restless neighbour; or (2) as the comment of Solomon recommending contentment with a moderate competence. The former meaning seems preferable; but our translators, if they had preferred it, would probably have inserted "saith he," as they have in *v.* 8.

7—12. The spectacle of a prosperous man whose condition is rendered vain by his isolation. Bishop Wordsworth considers these verses as an expression of the sadness of Solomon's own heart in his old age surrounded by his faithless (vii. 28) women. A remark of Lord Bacon would strengthen this opinion, "It is strange how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set on this fruit of friendship...for princes in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants cannot gather this fruit." But as the prosperous man is here (*v.* 8) represented as brotherless and childless, the picture is not entirely a transcript of Solomon's personal experience.

8. *a second*] Some have understood this of a wife: but it is better to interpret it more widely,—any one associated or connected with him.

10. *another*] Literally, "a second."

12. *if one prevail against him*] *i.e.* if [an enemy] prevail against one. The proverbs in this and the three preceding verses are illustrated by a saying quoted from the Talmud, "A man without companions is like the left hand without the right."

13—16. These verses are intended to set forth the vanity of earthly prosperity even on a throne. But there is great diversity of opinion as to the precise meaning of the words in which this lesson is conveyed. The passage is regarded (1) as a parable or fiction like that of the childless man in *v.* 8: so Knobel, Hengstenberg, Vaihinger, Ginsburg and others; or (2) as a history either of Abraham and Nimrod, of Joseph, of

child than an old and foolish king, † who will no more be admonished.

† Heb. *who knoweth not to be admonished.*

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also *he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor.

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16 *There is* no end of all the people, *even* of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

David, of Rehoboam, of Amaziah and Joash, of Onias and Joseph, or of some event not sufficiently known to us; so the Targum, Rashi, Kaiser (in Knobel), Hitzig, Umbreit, Ewald and others; or (3) as a prophecy of the succession of Rehoboam to Solomon, and of Jeroboam to Rehoboam in part of his kingdom; so Bishop Wordsworth and the Targum; or (4) as (*a*) setting forth first the vicissitudes of royal life in two proverbial sayings, *vv.* 13 and 14, and then (*b*) in *vv.* 15 and 16, the vicissitudes or procession of the whole human race, one generation giving place to another, which in its turn will be forgotten by its successor: this interpretation is quoted from Ibn Ezra by Professor Tayler Lewis, who adopts it.

The first and the fourth of these views appear to have the chief claim to consideration. For the conjectures in the second are untenable except so far as the position of Rehoboam, or the imprisonment of Joseph, may have suggested an idea to the writer. And the third applies the very comprehensive expressions "all the living," and "no end of all the people," to a section of the Twelve Tribes; and moreover, it requires to be supported by some proof that Solomon claimed the gift of prophecy. The first view has an advantage over the fourth in that it does not assign a totally unprecedented sense to the word *yeled*, "child," in *v.* 15; although it affords no satisfactory explanation of the very strong terms in which the number of his subjects is described. On the whole, the first appears to have the best claim.

13. *child*] Rather, **young man**. The word is used of men who were about forty years old in 1 K. xii. 8; and of Joseph at the age of seventeen in Gen. xxxvii. 30. Almost everywhere else it is used of a child.

14. *For out of...poor*] Rather, **For out of the house of bondage he goes forth to be a king; although he was born poor in his kingdom**, *i.e.* in the country over which he became king. So substantially the Sept., Ewald, Knobel, Zöckler and others, who apply both clauses of this verse to the young man. The word "becometh" in our Authorized Version should be in italics.

15. *I considered*] Lit. **I saw**. The vision of Micaiah, 1 K. xxii. 17, begins with the same word, and with a spectacle of a multitude of men.

all...sun] This is explained to mean "all the population of the young man's kingdom:" the hyperbole (Josh. xi. 4, &c.) "as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude" is quoted as a parallel to this expression.

the second child] This **second youth** is understood by some interpreters as identical with the one mentioned in *v.* 13; by others, as referring to another who shall succeed him. But the introduction of a third king, although not inconsistent with the grammatical construction, does not seem to be required by the parable.

The supporters of the fourth view which has been mentioned above translate the word *yeled* here, "birth," meaning "generation," for which a different word is used in i. 4.

16. *There is*] Rather, **There was**.

that have been before them] Rather, **before whom he was**, *i.e.* at the head of whom the young king was. Compare a similar phrase, Micah ii. 13. So the Targum, Gesenius, Knobel, Zöckler and others. The translation of the Authorized Version, though equally well supported, does not yield so good a sense.

they also that...him] *i.e.* the next generation shall forget this chosen king.

NOTE on CHAP. IV. 1.

THE CASES OF OPPRESSION DESCRIBED IN ECCLESIASTES.

Some readers have been surprised that instances of injustice and misery such as are here described should have occurred in the happy reign of Solomon; and such passages as iii. 16, iv. 1, and v. 8, have been used as an argument in favour of the hypothesis that the book was written at a later time, *e.g.* when Palestine was ruled by a governor deputed by the Persian kings.

These cases, however, represent not the whole but in truth only a small portion, of the condition of the people described in Ecclesiastes. They cannot be separated from the much more numerous descriptions of wealth, abundance, and enjoyment (for instance, chap. ii.

passim, iii. 13, and its parallel passages, iv. 4—12, v. 10—20, vi. 1—3, &c.), which would suit no age so well as that of Solomon. Indeed the condition of the people described here and in the book of Proverbs is one in which a great deal of external prosperity is mixed with a certain amount of violence and injustice. If in Proverbs such passages as iii. 10 be compared with iii. 31; or xxii. 1, 2, with xxii. 16 and 22, the *whole* picture seems to be so much like that which is given in Ecclesiastes, that both descriptions will be recognized as appropriate to the same age.

Moreover, the happiness of Solomon's reign must not be exaggerated. The historical description of it (1 K. iv. 20—25) strictly refers only to the kingdom of Israel. In the enormous territory recently annexed thereto by conquest, much confusion, injustice and oppression by local governors, must inevitably have prevailed. However beneficent the personal influence and character of the distant monarch at Jerusalem might have been, yet he could not efficiently control the proceedings of his numerous subordinate officers; and a wise king must have been aware of this state of things.

But even in Palestine itself all was not happiness. We are told of the degradation of the non-Jewish inhabitants to a state of slavery by the exaction of forced labour and tribute, 2 Chro. ii. 17, 18, and viii. 7, 8, 9; and furthermore of the heavy burden, 1 K. xii. 4, imposed even on the Israelites themselves, which contributed to bring about the disruption of the kingdom.

Further, we are nowhere told that the cases of oppression mentioned in Ecclesiastes occurred within the dominions of Solomon. There is no reason to suppose that he would abstain from referring, when it suited his purpose, to the condition of other nations as it was made known to him by his intimate acquaintance with the Tyrians (see Eusebius, 'Præp. Evang.' IX. 30, and Josephus, 'c. Apion.' I. 17, 18), by his intercourse both with Ethiopia and with the countries whose line of traffic passed through Tadmor, and by his commerce with Egypt and with Ophir.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Vanities in divine service*, 8 *in murmuring against oppression*, 9 *and in riches.* 18 *Joy in riches is the gift of God.*

KEEP thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, [a] than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* [1] thing before God: for

[a] 1 Sam. 15. 22. Ps. 50. 8. Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27.

[1] Or, *word*.

CHAP. V. At the beginning of this chapter a difference of style marks a transition to a new branch of the main subject. The Preacher now begins to address his hearer in the second person. The soliloquy, hitherto unbroken, is henceforth interrupted by personal addresses, which are repeated with increasing frequency from this place to the end of the book. Knobel, who divides the whole book into two parts, the first theoretical, the second practical, begins his second division here. The writer, he says, is gradually quitting the position of a philosophical inquirer, and begins to lay down the principles and maxims which he has deduced from his view of life.

It is worth noting that there is a striking resemblance between the line of thought pursued in this book and that of Asaph in Psalm lxxiii. The Psalmist describes himself first as viewing the prosperity of oppressors and undeserving men with envy and perplexity; next as "going into the sanctuary of God;" and then, as learning that God is a righteous Judge, though human ignorance hinders our seeing that He is, and as resolving that his life shall be guided by the counsel of God. So the Preacher, after setting forth his view of human life, here takes his hearer into the house of God for an explanation and directions. Taking the expression "goest to the house of God" not only literally, but also in the spiritual sense of entering into communion with God, we may understand Solomon here to admonish the reader both generally that reverence is due to God, and particularly that the vanity just described, which is mingled with the "portion" that God assigns to every man, ought to be treated as a divine mystery, not to be made an occasion of idle thought, hasty words, and rash resolutions, but to be considered in the fear of God (*vv.* 1—7); that the spectacle of unjust oppression is to be patiently referred to God's supreme judgment (8, 9); that mere riches are unsatisfying, bring care with them, and if hoarded are transitory (10—17); and that a man's enjoyment of his portion in life, including both labour and riches, is the gift of God (18—20).

1. *Keep thy foot*] *i.e.* Give thy mind to what thou art going to do.

be more ready to hear] These words have been translated in various ways without any material alteration of the sense. Knobel and others translate them, "to draw near for the purpose of hearing is better."

God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be [b] few.

[b] Prov. 10. 19. Matth. 6. 7.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice *is known* by multitude of words.

4 [c] When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for *he hath* no pleasure in fools: [d] pay that which thou hast vowed.

[c] Deut. 23. 21.

[d] Ps. 66. 13, 14.

5 Better *is it* that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it *was* an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?

7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there are* also *divers* vanities: but fear thou God.

8 ¶ If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not [1] at the matter: for *he that is* higher than the highest regardeth; and *there be* higher than they.

[1] Heb. *at the will, or, purpose.*

9 ¶ Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king *himself* is served by the field.

10 He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this *is* also vanity.

11 When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good *is there* to the owners thereof, saving the beholding *of them* with their eyes?

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to hear] *i.e.* to obey, as the word is rendered 1 S. xv. 22 and elsewhere. It does not refer to any reading of the Law in divine service. Zöckler.

6. *Suffer not thy mouth*, &c.] *i.e.* Do not make rash vows which may hereafter be the cause of evasion and prevarication, and remain unfulfilled.

before the angel] The Septuagint and some other ancient versions render "before the face of God," meaning of course a spiritual being representing the presence of God, a minister of divine justice (Exod. xxiii. 21), such a one as inflicted judgment upon David (2 S. xxiv. 17). Rashi followed by Knobel, and many modern interpreters, understand the angel to be a priest, and refer to Mal. ii. 7. But, as Ginsburg observes, that solitary passage is insufficient, because the word "angel" does not stand alone there, as it does here, but is a predicate of "priest:" and moreover if a priest had been meant here, the writer would have used a different preposition, *i.e.* not "before the face of," but, "to."

7. *For...vanities*] A slightly different translation of this verse has been suggested by Herzfeld and Ginsburg, which appears to be supported by the Sept. and the Syr. and to be more exact, **For** *so it happens* **through many dreams and vanities and many words.**

8. *matter*] Rather, **purpose**, as in margin, and in iii. 1. This rendering is preferred by the Chaldee and Jewish interpreters, Hengstenberg and Zöckler, and may refer either to the will of God or to the edict of an oppressive ruler.

marvel not] Zöckler compares 1 Pet. iv. 12, "think it not strange."

for he......they] Lit. **for High watches over High and the Highest over them,** *i.e.* the king in the capital watches over the judge or governor in the province, and God over both. Or it may be rendered, "High watches over High, and High Ones over them." The Jewish interpreters in general, with our A.V. and Rosenmüller, Knobel, Hengstenberg, Elster, Vaihinger and Zöckler, include a reference to a Heavenly Power: but the Septuagint, Vulg., Syr., Luther, Gesenius, Herzfeld, Hitzig and Ginsburg, understand the passage only of earthly rulers. The reference to God certainly seems more in harmony with the preceding verses, and more agreeable to the scope of this passage, which is intended for the consolation of one perplexed by the sight of injustice in high places. And it may be added that a Jewish writer would be more likely to suggest a single Person, than many, as the supreme authority.

9. *the king himself is served by the field*] Rather, **the king** *is* **subject to the field,** *i.e.* is dependent on its cultivation. So Herzfeld, Ginsburg, Tayler Lewis, and Bp. Wordsworth; who explain the connection of this verse with the preceding to be that the higher ranks, if they oppress the lower, lose thereby their own means of subsistence. The translation of this verse is much controverted. Possibly it may be connected with the following verse rather than with the preceding.

11. *they...that eat them*] *i.e.* the labourers employed, and the household servants.

12 The sleep of a labouring man *is* sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13 There is a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

14 But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and *there is* nothing in his hand.

15 [e] As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.

16 And this also *is* a sore evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and [f] what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?

17 All his days also he eateth in darkness, and *he hath* much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

18 ¶ Behold *that* which I have seen: [g] † *it is* good and comely *for one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun † all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it *is* his portion.

19 Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this *is* the gift of God.

20 ‖ For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth *him* in the joy of his heart.

[e] Job 1. 21. Ps. 49. 17. 1 Tim. 6. 7.
[f] chap. 1. 3.
[g] chap. 2. 24. & 3. 12.
† Heb. *there is a good which is comely*, &c.
† Heb. *the number of the days.*
‖ Or, *Though he give not much, yet he remembereth*, &c.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The vanity of riches without use.* 3 *Of children,* 6 *and old age without riches.* 9 *The vanity of sight and wandering desires.* 11 *The conclusion of vanities.*

THERE is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men:

2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil disease.

3 ¶ If a man beget an hundred *children*, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also *that* he have no burial; I say, *that* an untimely birth *is* better than he.

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12. *labouring man*] The word as now pointed does not mean a slave (LXX.), but "every one who, according to the divine direction, earns his bread in the sweat of his brow." Zöckler.

14. *evil travail*] The same words occur in i. 13, and iv. 8. Here they are explained to mean adverse accident, or unsuccessful employment.

17. *hath much sorrow...sickness*] Rather, **is very sad and hath pain and vexation.**

18. *Behold...eat*] Rather, **Behold what I have seen to be good, it is pleasant for a man to eat.** Compare ii. 24, and iii. 13; such thankful enjoyment is inculcated by the Law, Deut. xii. 7, 18, &c.

20. *shall not much remember the days*] because they will pass smoothly and pleasantly, whilst he lives in the consciousness of God's favour.

answereth him] *i.e.* grants his prayers.

CHAP. VI. After describing in the preceding verses the condition of the happiest of mankind, the Preacher in this chapter (again drawing from his own observation of men) contemplates the more common case of such men when their abundant prosperity is impaired, or reduced to vanity, by certain deficiencies. The instances which he mentions are those of men to whom God gives wealth, honour, success, children, and long life, yet from them He withholds the capacity of enjoyment, rest, permanence or contentment (1—9); no labour or effort of man can procure what God thus withholds (10). What then is good for man to do, whose lot in life is so thoroughly subject to vanity? (11, 12).

1. *common among*] Rather, **great** (heavy) **upon**; as in viii. 6, and ii. 21.

3. *so that the days of his years be many*] In order to avoid a seeming tautology, Knobel and others propose to translate, "and be a great man all his years."

no burial] It is evident from such passages as Isai. xiv. 19, 20; Jer. viii. 2, xvi. 4, 5, xxii. 19; Ps. lxxix. 2, 3, that for a corpse to lie unburied was a circumstance in itself of peculiar ignominy and dishonour.

4 For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known *any thing:* this hath more rest than the other.

6 ¶ Yea, though he live a thousand years twice *told*, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

7 All the labour of man *is* for his mouth, and yet the [1]appetite is not filled.

8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?

9 ¶ Better *is* the sight of the eyes [1]than the wandering of the desire: this *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

[1] Heb. *than the walking of the soul.*

10 That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it *is* man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.

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4. *he...his*] Rather, **it...its**. Not the long-lived man, but the untimely birth, is here spoken of.

5. *he...other*] Rather, **it hath not seen nor known the sun: this** (the untimely birth) **hath rest rather than the other.**

6. *he live*] Rather, **he hath lived.** "He" refers to the man spoken of in the third verse. His want of satisfaction in life, and the dishonour done to his corpse, are regarded as such great evils that they counterbalance his numerous children, and length of days, and render his lot viewed as a whole no better than the common lot of all. This verse should not be made the beginning of a new paragraph.

7—9. These verses form a separate paragraph, though closely connected with the preceding. The cases of dissatisfaction to which they refer resemble those mentioned in *vv.* 2 and 3. The best way of connecting them together seems to be thus:—"All labour is undertaken with a view to some profit, but as a rule the men who labour are never satisfied. What advantage then has he who labours if [being rich] he is wise, or if being poor he knows how to conduct himself properly; what advantage have such labourers above a fool? [None, so far as they are without contentment; for] a thing present before the eyes is preferable to a future which exists only in the desire."

8. *what*] Literally, **what profit.** The same expression is used in i. 3, and elsewhere.

knoweth...living] *i.e.* "knows how to conduct himself rightly among his contemporaries." So this phrase is explained by Drusius, Grotius, Knobel, Heiligstedt, Zöckler and others. The ancient versions paraphrase it in different senses.

10. *That...man*] Lit. "That which has been, its name was called long ago, and was known that it is man:" *i.e.* God from the beginning definitely ordained the course of events external to man, and constituted man in such a way that events materially affect his conduct and his destiny. The meaning is nearly the same as that of the common saying, "Man is the creature of circumstances." The connection with the preceding verses is this:—God, by withholding from certain men the gift of contentment, and thus subjecting them to vanity, is acting according to the predetermined course of His Providence which man cannot alter. See Note at the end of this Chapter, and comp. Rom. viii. 20, "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same," &c.

That which hath been] This phrase occurs previously, and denotes events past or current, either (i. 9) as they present themselves to man, or (iii. 15) as they are ordered by God. It must be borne in mind that the writer views all outward events as the ordinance of God Who governs the world which He created (see iii. 11, sq., vii. 13, ix. 1, xi. 5, &c.): otherwise this verse by itself would seem to a person imbued with fatalistic principles to admit of being interpreted in accordance with those principles.

is named already] Rather, **was named long ago**; *i.e.* it was decreed, its nature and place were defined [by the Almighty]. It has been suggested that in using this peculiar phrase the writer had before his mind the naming of all creatures by Adam, Gen. ii. 19. This is of course possible; and it would become probable if the phrase "that which hath been" were translated "what he is," or "what each thing is:" but that translation is unsupported by ancient versions and the principal modern critics, at variance with the meaning of the phrase elsewhere in this book, doubtful in point of grammar, and not easy to connect with the context.

is known] Rather, **was known.** Known to the Creator (comp. Acts xv. 18), and to His creatures who have had experience thereof.

that it is man] That is, that the course of events shapes the conduct and character of man. "It" is expressed emphatically in the Hebrew.

11 ¶ Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what *is* man the better?

12 For who knoweth what *is* good for man in *this* life, †all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as [a] a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

† Heb. *the number of the days of the life of his vanity.*
[a] Ps. 144. 4.

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him that is mightier] *i.e.* God; comp. ix. 1; and 1 Cor. x. 22. So nearly all the interpreters, with some characteristic differences; thus: "change arising out of circumstances," Grotius; "more powerful men," Bauer; "the angel of death," Jarchi (Knobel).

11. *things*] Namely, the various circumstances detailed in the foregoing chapters, from the Preacher's personal experience, and his observation of other men, ending with the comprehensive declaration in *v.* 10 to the effect that vanity is an essential part of the constitution of creation as it now exists, and was foreknown. The Jews (according to Drusius) reckon that the preceding verse closes the first half of the book, which contains 111 verses. Ewald makes it the beginning of the third discourse, out of four into which he divides the book. It seems best to regard the tenth verse as indicating the extreme point reached in the Preacher's investigation of vanity, which began at i. 2; and *vv.* 11, 12, as a fuller restatement of the question first indicated in i. 3, which he begins to answer in chap. vii.

In translating "things," our A.V. is supported by Jarchi, Grotius, Drusius, Rosenmüller, Ginsburg, Zöckler and others mentioned by Knobel, who also adopts it. The ancient versions with Ewald, Hitzig and others translate "words," and understand it as referring to useless talk. But this does not suit the context so well.

what is man the better?] Rather, **what is profitable to man?** The Hebrew is nearly identical with i. 3.

12. *after him*] *i.e.* on earth, in his own present sphere of action, after his departure hence: comp. ii. 19, iii. 22. It does not refer to his condition in the grave. So Zöckler.

NOTE on Chap. vi. 10.

That ... man] This difficult passage is construed in various ways. Ewald translates, "What there is, its name is named long ago and known, that it is man;" and he explains it thus:—"What hath been and is, not only came into existence long ago, as i. 9, iii. 15, but also has been known and named, and is acknowledged that it, besides other things, is specially man, that man always remains the same, and cannot go beyond his appointed bounds." This translation is not incorrect, like the ancient versions ("is known what man is," LXX., and "he who is about to be, his name," &c., Vulg.), and that of Hengstenberg and others ("what man is, his name," &c.). It is also for the most part identical with the versions of Elster, Vaihinger, Ginsburg and Zöckler. But it is not free from objection, because it assigns to the phrase rendered "what there is" a somewhat different sense from that which it has in i. 9, iii. 15, where it is used simply with reference to events which have happened in the order of Divine Providence. Knobel's version, "That which has been, its name was named already, and it is known that he is," &c., is open to the objection that it attributes different tenses to two preterites which are coupled together, and makes (as do Herzfeld and others) the latter an impersonal verb. Knobel regards the clause as apparently unconnected with what precedes, and as abruptly inserted to remind the reader of the immutable course of things in which no change can be made by feeble man.

Perhaps a slightly different construction of the text might be more consistent with the usage of the writer of this book, and in harmony with his tenets. The literal translation is, "That which has been, its name was called long ago and was known that it *is* man:" *i.e.* The course of events was appointed in the beginning by Almighty God, and was known to be so constituted that it exercises a prevailing influence on the will, conduct and destiny of man, and thus it makes, or is, man. The elliptical expression "it is man" would seem strange if it had not a parallel in this book, viz. xii. 13, "this is the whole man." As there, that which man ought to do and feel is said to be or constitute the ideal or perfect man; so here, that which he does and suffers is brought home to the actual man by the same emphatic form of expression. Nor is this phrase without a parallel in other writers, *e.g.* Ps. cix. 4, "I [give myself unto] prayer."

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Remedies against vanity are, a good name,* 2 *mortification,* 7 *patience,* 11 *wisdom.* 23 *The difficulty of wisdom.*

[a] Prov. 15. 30. & 22. 1

A [a]GOOD name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

2 ¶ *It is* better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will lay *it* to his heart.

3 ‖ Sorrow *is* better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

‖ Or, *Anger.*

4 The heart of the wise *is* in the

CHAP. VII. The style of the writer here changes so as to shew, specially in chapters vii. and x., a striking resemblance to that of the writer of the book of Proverbs. Hitherto the principal object has been to state the vanity of the conditions of human life: henceforth the principal object will be to direct man how to conduct himself under those conditions. The last six chapters of Ecclesiastes contain a series of maxims, intermingled with statements of the writer's own experience, and with direct addresses to the reader; the object of all which is to shew what man should aim at, and what he should do, in order to be as free as his condition allows from the burden of vanity.

The general drift of the writer's counsels throughout these six chapters, and particularly in vii. 1—22, points to wisdom united with the fear of God as the "good for man in this life" which was stated at the end of the last chapter as the object of inquiry. It is illustrated by frequent reference to, and contrast with, that evil which consists of folly allied with wickedness. In pursuing it, good repute, seriousness, calmness, patience, trust in God, and forbearance, are set forth as objects to be aimed at, 1—22. In his own pursuit of wisdom he found his greatest obstacle to be his familiarity with women; and its final result was a humbling conviction of the fallen state of man, 23—29.

1. *name...ointment*] There is a paronomasia in Hebrew between *shem*, name, and *shemen*, ointment, which cannot be adequately represented in English. It is worth noting that the paronomasia is repeated from the Song of Sol. i. 3. "Good" might be more correctly printed in italics in our A. V., as it is in Prov. xxii. 1; though it is often implied in the Hebrew use of the word "name," just as it is in our use of the words "reputation, fame." The reputation of a wise man is again compared to ointment in x. 1. The use of oil or ointment as a cosmetic is general and indeed desirable in hot climates, and is not, as Knobel suggests, distinctive of an unwise person: the privation of it is even a sign of distress or sorrow (Deut. xxviii. 40; Matt. vi. 17, &c.). The likeness between reputation and odour supplies a common metaphor: the contrast is between reputation, as an honourable attainment which only wise men win, and fragrant odour, as a gratification of the senses which all men enjoy.

The connection of this verse with the preceding verses is this:—the man to whom Solomon addresses himself, who is supposed to want to know what is profitable for man and good in this life, is here told to act in such a way as ordinarily secures a good reputation (*i.e.* to act like a wise man), and not to aim at the gratification of the senses; and to teach himself this hard lesson,—to regard the day of death as preferable to the day of birth.

the day of death, &c.] Though Solomon seems in some places to feel strongly (as in ii. 16, iii. 19, 21, &c.) that natural fear of death which is, in a great measure, mistrust founded on the ignorance which Christ dispelled; yet he states the advantage of death over life in respect of its freedom from toil, oppression, restlessness, ii. 17, iv. 2, vi. 5, and in respect of its implying an immediate and a nearer approach to God, iii. 21, xii. 7. Grotius refers to the well-known national custom of the Thracians to lament over the birth of a child, and to celebrate a funeral with rejoicing. But the hopeless misery implied in that Gentile lamentation was as remote on the one hand from the sentiment of this Jewish writer, as was on the other hand the joy and rejoicing with which the early Christians celebrated what they called a martyr's birthday. While Solomon preferred the day of death, he might still (with Luther here) have regarded birth as a good thing, and as having its place in the creation of God.

2. *that*] Namely, what is seen in the house of mourning.

lay it to his heart] Consider it attentively The same phrase occurs ix. 1.

3. *Sorrow*] Rather, **Seriousness.** The same word is rendered "grief" in i. 18, and "anger" in vii. 9.

the heart is made better] Is not only morally improved, but also, as this phrase signifies in all other places (xi. 9, Judg. xix. 6, 9, &c.), is made bright and joyful. Luther compares 2 Cor. vi. 10, "sorrowful yet always rejoicing," and remarks that this verse may appear at first sight inconsistent with ii. 24, and other passages where enjoyment is spoken of as good, but that the mind which bears itself equally in human concerns, whether they be pleasant or

house of mourning; but the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.

[b] Prov. 13. 18. & 15. 31, 32.

5 [b] *It is* better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

† Heb. *sound.*

6 For as the †crackling of thorns under a pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool: this also *is* vanity.

[c] Deut. 16. 19.

7 ¶ Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; [c]and a gift destroyeth the heart.

8 Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: *and* the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.

[d] Prov. 14. 17. & 16. 32.

9 [d] Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Say not thou, What is *the cause* that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire †wisely concerning this.

† Heb. *out of wisdom.*

11 ¶ Wisdom *is* ‖good with an inheritance: and *by it there is* profit to them that see the sun.

‖ Or, *as good as an inheritance, yea, better too.*

12 For wisdom *is* a †defence, *and* money *is* a defence: but the excellency of knowledge *is, that* wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

† Heb. *shadow.*

13 Consider the work of God: for [e]who can make *that* straight, which he hath made crooked?

[e] chap. 1. 15.

14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath †set the one

† Heb. *made*

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sorrowful, must always be glad, free, and at peace.

4. *house of mourning...house of mirth*] These phrases acquire a forcible significance from the Eastern custom of prolonging both festive and mournful celebrations through several days. See Gen. l. 10; Judg. xiv. 17. Knobel and Vaihinger justly remark that this verse indicates the limited sense in which the Preacher elsewhere commends a life of enjoyment, meaning not the abandonment of ourselves to pleasures, but the thankful and sober use of the beautiful things which God gives us.

6. *as the crackling of thorns*] Noisy while it lasts, Joel ii. 5, and quickly extinguished, Ps. cxviii. 12. See note on Ps. lviii. 9. There is a paronomasia between *sirim*, thorns, and *sir*, pot.

7. *oppression...gift*, &c.] Rather, **oppression** (or *extortion*) **maketh a wise man foolish; and a bribe**, &c. The meaning is, that if a wise man, being in a high position, exercises oppression (see the sense of oppression, Ps. lxii. 10), or practises extortion, he becomes a fool in so doing. See the reference, Deut. xvi. 19. This verse is a warning against impatience in the exercise of power or the acquisition of riches.

8. *Better*] Inasmuch as something certain is attained; and the wise and patient man contemplates the end throughout an entire course of action, and does not rest upon the beginning.

patient] Lit. "long." Compare the long-suffering so often commended in the New Testament.

proud] Lit. "high;" here used in the sense of impatient.

9. *resteth*] Compare Eph. iv. 26.

11. *good with*] Modern critics generally prefer the marginal translation, "as good as:" the difference is not material, but the text is in accordance with ancient versions and with the common meaning of the words.

and by it there is profit] Lit. **and is profitable**. The word used here is the same that is used in vi. 11, where it is unfortunately lost in the A. V. This verse looks like an answer to the question asked in vi. 11.

them that see the sun] *i.e.* the living: compare vi. 5.

12. *wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence*] Lit. "in the shadow of wisdom, in the shadow of money," *i.e.* he who is defended from adversity by his wisdom is in as good a position as he who is defended by his riches. For "shadow" in this sense see Ps. cxxi. 5, &c.

excellency] Lit. **profit**.

giveth life to] Lit. "causes to live," "makes alive." So Prov. iii. 18. Rosenmüller and others understand this to mean that Wisdom preserves life in safety, or renders life calm and happy: but a deeper meaning is elicited by comparing (with Professor T. Lewis) these words with those of our Lord, "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life," John vi. 63, and see Matt. iv. 4.

13. *the work of God*] The same phrase occurs in iii. 11, and here as there it signifies the scheme of Divine Providence, the course of events which God orders and controls, as (in the language of Bp. Butler, Serm. XV. 'On the Ignorance of Man') "the Monarch of the universe, a dominion unlimited in extent and everlasting in duration, the general system of which must necessarily be quite beyond our comprehension." It comprises both events which are straight, *i.e.* in accordance with our expectation, and events which are crooked, *i.e.* which by their seeming inequality baffle our comprehension.

14. *In the day*, &c.] Bishop Bull has two

over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

15 All *things* have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just *man* that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked *man* that prolongeth *his life* in his wickedness.

16 Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou †destroy thyself?

† Heb. *be desolate?*

17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die †before thy time?

† Heb. *not in thy time?*

18 *It is* good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

19 *f* Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty *men* which are in the city.

f Prov. 21. 22. & 24. 5 chap. 9. 16

20 *g* For *there is* not a just man

g 1 Kin. 8. 46. Prov. 20. 9. 1 John 1. 8.

elaborate sermons, XVI. and XVII., on this verse, from which he deduces these observations, "The good and prosperous days and times of our life are in God's design given to us as peculiar times of comfort and rejoicing. The evil days, the days and times of our affliction and trouble, are in God's design the proper seasons of recollection and serious consideration. The Providence of God hath so contrived it, that our good and evil days, our days of prosperity and adversity, should be intermingled each with the other. This mixture of good and evil days is by the Divine Providence so proportioned, that it sufficiently justifies the dealings of God towards the sons of men, and obviates all our discontent and murmurings against Him." There is a remarkable echo of this verse in a fragment of the Greek poet Archilochus, B.C. 688, which ends thus:—

ἀλλὰ χαρτοῖσίν τε χαῖρε, καὶ κακοῖσιν ἀσχάλα
μὴ λίην· γίγνωσκε δ' οἷος ῥυθμὸς ἀνθρώπους ἔχει.

"But in prosperous fortune so rejoice, and in reverses mourn,
As well knowing what is destined for the race of woman born."

(Merivale's 'Anthology.')

set the one over against the other] Rather, **made this as well as that**, *i.e.* the day of adversity (lit. evil), as well as the day of prosperity (lit. good). A recent writer (Mr T. Tyler, on the 'Date of Ecclesiastes') calls attention to the seeming imitation of this passage in Ecclesiasticus xxxiii. 13—15, as affording a strong presumption that this book was written before the days of the son of Sirach.

to the end, &c.] God hath constituted the vicissitude of prosperity and adversity in such a way that no man can forecast the events that shall follow when he is removed from his present state. Compare note on vi. 12.

15. *the days of my vanity*] This reference to his past life does not imply that those days of vanity were ended. See note on i. 12.

there is a just man, &c.] The meaning and connection of this and the three following verses may be best explained by a paraphrase of the whole. Throughout this chapter wisdom is inculcated as the antidote to, or as capable of mitigating, the great evil, vanity: and in these verses Solomon states how the wise man should regard the "crooked work of God" when it bears upon him. After citing two instances of such work, viz. the reward of long life withheld from the righteous and given to the wicked, he says in effect, "Do not think that thou couldest alter this course of events so as to make it straight, that thou art more righteous or more wise than He is Who ordained these events: viewing them in that spirit thou wilt only be lost in amazement at the incomprehensible ways of Providence. To set up thy judgment in opposition to His would imply an excess of wickedness and folly, deserving the punishment of premature death. But rather it is good for thee to grasp these seeming anomalies; if thou ponder them they will tend to impress on thee that fear of God which is a part of wisdom, and will guide thee safely (compare viii. 12, 13) through all the perplexities of this life." This interpretation agrees in the main with that of Döderlein and Professor Tayler Lewis. Other interpreters consider the 16th verse as addressed either to severe judges, or to men who practise ascetic austerities, or (compare ix. 7—12 and xi. 9) as a sentiment put into the mouth of an imaginary objector and rebuked in the following verse: but the former certainly of these interpretations, and perhaps the latter also, cannot be easily reconciled with the exact words of the original or with the context. The suggestion that these verses are intended to advocate a middle course between sin and virtue is at variance with the whole tenor of the book.

16. *destroy thyself*] Or, "be amazed," so Sept. and Vulg. Compare "marvel not," v. 8.

20. *For*] Rather, as the word sometimes signifies, **But**. The connection of this verse with the two preceding becomes clearer if it is borne in mind that the fear of God, wisdom, and justice, are merely different sides of one and the same character, the formation of which is the aim of all the precepts in this chapter.

upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

21 Also [t]take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:

[t] Heb. *give not thine heart.*

22 For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

23 ¶ All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it *was* far from me.

24 That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

25 [t]I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason *of things*, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness *and* madness:

[t] Heb. *I and mine heart compassed.*

26 [h]And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart *is* snares and nets, *and* her hands *as* bands: [t]whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.

[h] Prov. 22. 14.

[t] Heb. *he that is good before God.*

27 Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, [t]*counting* one by one, to find out the account:

[t] Or, *weighing one thing after another, to find out the reason.*

28 Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.

29 Lo, this only have I found, [i]that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

[i] Gen. 1. 27.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 Kings are greatly to be respected. 6 The divine providence is to be observed. 12 It is better with the godly in adversity, than with the wicked in prosperity. 16 The work of God is unsearchable.

The English reader should be aware that the words "just" in verses 20 and 15, and "righteous" in verse 16, are exactly the same in Hebrew.

21, 22. *curse...cursed*] Rather, **speak evil of...spoken evil of.**

23. *I will be*] Rather, **I am.** So Rosenmüller. Solomon means that there was a time when he thought himself wise enough to comprehend the work of God, and therefore needed for himself the admonition conveyed in verse 16 and the self-humbling conviction declared in verses 20 and 23.

it] *i.e.* wisdom. Compare the later confession viii. 17.

24. *That*, &c.] Lit. **Far off is that which hath been; and deep, deep, who can find it out?** So Drusius and others. The peculiar phrase "that which hath been" here, as elsewhere (i. 9, iii. 15, vi. 10), signifies events as they have occurred in the order of Divine Providence. The Targum explains it, "that which has been from the days of eternity."

25. *reason*] It is remarkable that the same word occurs again in verse 27, where it is translated "account," and in *v.* 29, where it is rendered "invention:" in ix. 10 it is rendered "device:" it is derived from a root signifying "to count."

26. Compare the account of Solomon's wives, 1 K. xi. 1—8; also Prov. ii. 16—19, v. 3, &c.

28 *one man*] As we say, "a real man," one whose good qualities quite satisfy our expectations: compare the expression, Job ix. 3, and xxxiii. 23, "one among a thousand."

a woman] It has been observed that the number of Solomon's wives and concubines (1 K. xi. 3) was a thousand.

29. *God hath made*] Rather, **God made.** This is a definite allusion to the original state of man; a state in which he was exempt from vanity.

sought] Pascal says, "Man has visibly lost his way, and feels in himself some relics of a happy state from which he has fallen and which he cannot recover. He seeks it everywhere with restlessness and unsuccessfully in impenetrable darkness." ('Pensées' II., Partie i. § 5.)

inventions] "Dexterity, promptness, presence of mind, sagacity, shrewdness, powers of persuasion, talent for business,—what are these but developments of intellect which our fallen state has occasioned, and probably far from the highest which our mind is capable of? Are not these and others at best only of use in remedying the effects of the fall, and so far indeed demanding of us a deep thankfulness towards the Giver, but not having a legitimate employment except in a world of sickness and infirmity?" J. H. Newman, 'Sermons,' Vol. V., Sermon 8.

CHAP. VIII. Although he was thus impeded and in some degree baffled in his own pursuit of wisdom, Solomon yet persists in regarding wisdom as the nearest approach to "that good for man" which he is seeking; and here he inculcates on his hearers, as a part of that wisdom, a spirit of obedience, 1—5. But, resuming the account of his own experience, he observes that even wisdom does not render a man exempt from the common lot of that

WHO *is* as the wise *man?* and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? [a]a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and †the boldness of his face shall be changed.

a Prov. 17. 24.
† Heb. *the strength.*

2 I *counsel thee* to keep the king's commandment, and *that* in regard of the oath of God.

3 Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

4 Where the word of a king *is*, *there is* power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?

5 Whoso keepeth the commandment †shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

6 ¶ Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man *is* great upon him.

7 For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him ‖when it shall be?

‖ Or, *how it shall be?*

8 *There is* no man that hath power [b]over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither *hath he* power in the day of death: and *there is* no ‖discharge in *that* war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

b Job 14. 5.
‖ Or, *casting off weapons.*

9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is

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misery which springs out of the incomprehensible course of external events: yet in the face of such anomalies he determined to abide in the fear of God and to trust in His supreme justice, 6—14, to enjoy God's gifts thankfully as his portion, and to acknowledge the natural incompetence of every man, however large his knowledge, to find out the unsearchable ways of God, the Ruler of all that is done in the world, 15—17.

1. *and who*] Rather, **and** *as* **he who knoweth.** Knobel, Ginsburg, and others, repeat the conjunction from the preceding clause. The whole verse is an assertion of the superior advantage of wisdom. Its possessor excels other men: it imparts serenity (so Knobel) to his countenance, and removes the expression of gloom (Knobel) or fierceness, as the word is rendered in Deut. xxviii. 50, and Dan. viii. 23.

2. *commandment*] Lit. "mouth," as Gen. xlv. 21, &c.

oath] A reference to the oath of allegiance taken, according to usual practice in Israel, to Solomon at his accession to the throne, 1 Chro. xxix. 24.

3. *Be not...sight*] Lit. "Do not hasten to walk from his presence," *i.e.* "do not fall away from him" (Knobel). Compare x. 4. The opposite phrase "walk with him," *i.e.* follow him, occurs in iv. 15.

stand not] *i.e.* "do not persist," so Vulg., Rosenmüller and others.

in an evil thing] *i.e.* "in rebellion," so Rosenm. Comp. Prov. xxiv. 21.

5. *commandment*] *i.e.* "the word of the king," *v.* 4. The Hebrew word, however, is not the same as is used in *v.* 2.

shall feel] Lit. **will know.** The meaning of the verse is, "He who obeys will not be an accomplice in any act of rebellion; and if he be a wise man he discerns (lit. knows) that the king's commandment or action is liable to correction, if it be wrong, in God's time and by God's judgment." For the meaning attached by Solomon to time, and judgment, and purpose, compare ch. iii., and specially iii. 11 and 17.

6. *Because, therefore*] The particle thus translated is the same as is rendered "for" twice in the next verse: and it may be so rendered in this verse.

The fact contemplated in the last verse, of God's time and judgment being in opposition to a king's purpose or commandment, suggests the thought (repeated ix. 11, 12) that such discord is a misery (=evil, vi. 1) common to the whole race of man.

man] Heb. *Adam* = mankind. There is no opposition between the word "man" here and "man" in the preceding verse, where it does not represent any noun in the Hebrew, but is inserted to complete the sense in our A. V., and might be printed in italics.

7. *when*] Or, "how," Rosenmüller and Zöckler. For the meaning of this verse, compare iii. 22, vi. 12, x. 14.

8. *neither hath he power*] Rather, **and** *there is* **no power.** Compare iii. 19.

no discharge, &c.] *i.e.* "no exemption from the final hour of struggle between life and death." For cases of exemption from military service under the Mosaic law, see Deut. xx. 5—8.

wickedness] Though the life of the wicked may be prolonged, vii. 15, for God's inscrutable purposes, yet wickedness itself has no inherent power or tendency to prolong the life of the wicked man.

9. *All...done*] Lit. "All this I saw and (= when) giving I gave my heart to all the work (or, doing) that is done." Compare i. 13.

to his own hurt] Rather, **to his hurt,** *i.e.* to the hurt of the subject. Solomon is

done under the sun: *there is* a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this *is* also vanity.

11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

12 ¶ Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet surely I know that [c]it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:

13 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong *his* days, *which are* as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.

14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just *men*, unto whom it [d]happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked *men*, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also *is* vanity.

15 [e]Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

[c] ...37. 18, 19.

[d] Ps. 73. 14.

[e] chap. 3. 2.

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still contemplating the case of an unwise king whose command is obeyed "in regard to the oath of God," even to the hurt of the wise man who obeys him.

10. *I saw*, &c.] *i.e.* "I saw wicked [rulers] buried, who came [into the world, as i. 4] and went from the holy place (the seat of authority and justice, Deut. xix. 17; 2 Chro. xix. 6; Eccles. v. 1, also iii. 16), and they were forgotten in the city where they had so ruled to the hurt of their subjects: this—their being at last overtaken by death and oblivion—shews their lot also to be vanity." The ancient versions apply the whole of this verse to the wicked, which seems the preferable interpretation: but another, which Dr Ginsburg traces to Ibn Ezra, has been adopted by Knobel and many eminent critics, to the following effect. "I have seen wicked men buried; and [others] came into the world, and from the holy place they went out of the world, and were forgotten in the city where they had done rightly" (so the phrase is rendered 2 K. vii. 9, and elsewhere).

11—13. The wicked, described in *v.* 10, afford not only an instance of vanity, as there stated, but also an instance of the delay of God's judgment which tends to encourage men to behave wickedly. This, however, does not shake the Preacher's confidence in the justice of God both towards the godly and towards the wicked.

12. *his days be prolonged*] *i.e.* in his wickedness. Compare vii. 15.

I] This pronoun is emphatically expressed in the Hebrew, as if to mark the opposition to the "sons of men" in *v.* 11.

14. *There is*, &c.] The apparently unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in this life is another instance of vanity, being transient and causing vexation.

which is done upon the earth] It is worth noting that the instance of vanity, to which these words are specifically applied, is the seeming inequality of God's justice. For if they are considered, as they may fairly be considered, in connection with the profession in *v.* 12 of personal faith in God's absolute justice, the conclusion is irresistible, that, whatever reason the Preacher had for reserve in declaring his belief, he certainly looked forward to a final judgment in a future state of existence. Compare iii. 17, and xii. 14. Yet Bp. Warburton ('Div. Leg.,' Book v. § 6) could class the author of Ecclesiastes with those ancient heathen philosophers who disbelieved a future state of rewards and punishments, denied all future personality to the soul, and held the "refusion" of it into the soul of the world.

15. *Then I commended mirth*, &c.] **Gladness**, or "joy," as in ii. 10, would represent the meaning of the Hebrew word better than "mirth." It is applied not only to the pleasures arising from the bodily senses, but also frequently to religious joy. This sentiment as a conclusion of the writer's personal experience occurs here for the fifth (compare ii. 24, iii. 12 and 13, 22, v. 18) and last time; though it is repeated in the form of advice ix. 7, and substantially in xi. 9. The charge of Epicureanism which has been brought against such passages will not be admitted by any one who considers that the Preacher is therein careful to set forth pleasure as a gift from God, to be earned by labour, and received with thankfulness to the Giver, and to be accounted for to Him. His estimate of the pleasures of the senses is recorded in vii. 2—6.

16 ¶ When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also *there is that* neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:)

17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it*; yea farther; though a wise *man* think to know *it*, yet shall he not be able to find *it*.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Like things happen to good and bad.* 4 *There is a necessity of death unto men.* 7 *Comfort is all their portion in this life.* 11 *God's providence ruleth over all.* 13 *Wisdom is better than strength.*

FOR all this [1]I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred *by* all *that is* before them.

2 [a]All *things come* alike to all:

[1] Heb. *I gave, or set to my heart.*

[a] Ps. 73. 3, 12, 13. Mal. 3. 15.

16, 17. *When I applied*, &c.] These two verses are sometimes divided from the 15th, and treated as the beginning of a new discourse. But it seems difficult to disconnect them from the preceding verses. The fifteenth verse alone would be an inadequate conclusion to the consideration of the seeming inequalities in the scheme of Providence; but *vv.* 16 and 17 appropriately supplement it with the reflection that the man who goes beyond that limited sphere within which he can labour and be contented, and investigates the whole work of God, will find that his finite intelligence cannot grasp it.

16. *business*] The same word is translated "travail," i. 13, iii. 10.

for also there is that...seeth] Most interpreters understand this to refer to mankind generally as the doers of the "business:" others, perhaps more correctly, refer the sleeplessness to "mine heart," *i.e.* the writer himself.

17. Compare iii. 11, vii. 23—25. There is no fuller statement in Ecclesiastes of the incapacity of every man with his finite understanding to comprehend the plans and operations of the Infinite and Eternal God. Compare with this another utterance of Solomon written apparently at an earlier age, and at an earlier period of his search: "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honour of kings is to search out a matter," Prov. xxv. 2.

CHAP. IX. The first verse of this chapter is closely connected with the last verse of the preceding chapter. Here he begins by stating a reason for his universal conclusion that no man can understand the works of God, viz. because he perceived that even to good and wise men the ways of Providence are inscrutable, *v.* 1; it is impossible to trace in this life discriminating justice in the course of God's dealings respectively with them and with evil men; all events, including death, come alike to all; all are deprived of the exercise of their faculties of mind and body when they lose their portion in this life, 2—6. If men determine to make the utmost use of their gifts and their powers in this life, 7—10, yet the writer's experience shewed him that they are liable in the course of Divine Providence to have their career of activity and enjoyment cut short, and their purpose overruled by some sudden event, 11, 12.

He did not, however, rest in this view of life. He saw also that practically wisdom is able to deliver those who are in the grasp of superior strength. To this he recurs (compare ch. vii., viii.), and sets forth the practical advantage in this life of that wisdom which includes the fear of God, although under adverse circumstances it is liable to be despised or forgotten, or lost in tumult, or frustrated by sin, 13—18, or rendered ineffective by inconsistency, x. 1.

The first ten verses of this chapter appear to have been in the mind of the writer of the book of Wisdom, ii. 1—9.

1. *For all this I considered*] A better arrangement of these words in an English translation would be, **For** [or, but] **I considered all this.** A good man's trust in God is here set forth as a counterpoise to our helpless ignorance of the ways of Providence. Compare vii. 18 and viii. 12.

in the hand of God] Both under His special protection (Deut. xxxiii. 3, &c.), as righteous (compare viii. 12), and under His direction and influence (Prov. xxi. 1), as men.

no man...them] Lit. **both love** *and* **also hatred man knoweth not: all** *are* **before them.** Love and hatred are here understood by almost all interpreters to mean the ordinary outward tokens of God's favour or displeasure, *i.e.* prosperity and adversity. "Man knoweth not" is interpreted in two ways: either "man knows not whether to expect prosperity or adversity from God; all his earthly future is in obscurity" (Knobel, Zöckler); or, "Man knows not whether the events which happen to him are sent for his probation or for his punishment" (Jerome, Rosenmüller). The former is preferable: it represents man as looking forward into the future and contemplating various contingencies without knowing which of them shall be his lot.

there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; *and* he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath.

3 This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness *is* in their heart while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead.

4 ¶ For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

7 ¶ Go thy way, eat thy bread

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2. *event*] Anything which happens to a man from without, death or any other contingency. See note on ii. 14.

sweareth] *i.e.* swears lightly or profanely; as is evident from the antithesis.

3. *yea, also*] Lit. **and also**. The sentiment is the same as in viii. 11; the seeming indiscriminateness of the course of events tends to encourage evil-disposed men in their folly.

after that] Rather, **afterwards**.

4. *For to him that is joined*] There is a different reading of the Hebrew text, according to which these words should be translated "For who is excepted [*i.e.* from death]?" and this is preferred by Knobel, Gesenius, and many others. But the reading translated by our A.V. is supported by most of the ancient versions, Ewald and others, and seems preferable.

For to him] Rather, **Yet to him**: so Ewald and Heiligstedt. Notwithstanding the evils of life set forth in the preceding verses, life has its advantage, and specially when compared with death.

dog] This animal was to the Hebrews a type of all that is hateful and contemptible (1 S. xvii. 43, &c.).

5. This verse and the next are an explanation of the advantage of life above death: and they must be interpreted in a sense consistent with the author's sentiments (vii. 1—4) as to the advantage of death, and as to final retribution; see viii. 12, and note on viii. 14. This verse may be thus explained:—"The living are always conscious that there is a future before them: but the dead are unconscious; they earn nothing, receive nothing, even the memory of them soon disappears." It is evident that Solomon here confines his observation strictly to the phenomena of this life, and describes what he sees, not what he believes; there is no reference here to the fact or the mode of the existence of the soul in another world, which are matters of faith. Zöckler remarks, "The reality of retribution in another world is here denied only apparently; for the writer is here contemplating only the conditions of the present world, and he turns his eyes quite away from the lot in the next world of 'the spirit that returns unto God,' xi. 9, xii. 7."

6. The dead are no longer excited by the passions which belong to men in this life; their share in its activity has ceased. The last clause of this verse indicates the limited sphere within which the writer's observations on the dead are confined, viz. their portion in, or relation to, this world.

envy] Otherwise rendered "zeal" or "emulation."

now] Rather, **long ago**.

7—12. Jerome has pointed out the necessity of reading these six verses in connection, in order to arrive at the meaning of the writer. The same train of thought is passing through his mind here as in chap. ii. 1—12, viz. a favourite of God exerting himself to make proof to the utmost of his earthly blessings and finding them end in disappointment so far as they depend on his own exertions.

Here, after the description in *vv.* 5, 6 of the portionless condition of the dead, the next thought which occurs is that the man who is prosperous and active should simply enjoy his portion all through this life: this thought is stated in the language of exhortation in *vv.* 7—10; and then, in *vv.* 11, 12, follows the correcting thought, introduced as usual (ii. 12, iv. 1, 7) by "I returned," the same thought which is brought forward in iii. 1, viii. 6 (see note on iii. 1—15), viz. that the course of events is disposed and regulated by another Will than that of man.

The former part (*vv.* 7—10) of this passage taken separately has been regarded as an exhortation to a luxurious, godless, unchaste life. This interpretation would be inconsistent generally with the whole tenor of this book, and specially with *vv.* 7 and 9,

with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

9 † Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: [b] for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

† Heb. *See*, or, *Enjoy life.*

[b] chap. 2. 24. & 3. 13. & 5. 18.

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

11 ¶ I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race *is* not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

12 For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so *are* the sons of men [c] snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

[c] Prov. 29. 6.

13 ¶ This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto me:

14 *There was* a little city, and

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for the person addressed is one whose life of labour is already pleasing to God, and who bears visible tokens of God's favour. So Luther, in his commentary on this passage.

It seems unnecessary to suppose, as do some interpreters, that Solomon here makes use of the same kind of ironical language which Isaiah employs on more than one occasion, *e.g.* viii. 9, ii. 10, l. 11, where he forcibly describes, in words of exhortation, conduct which he mentions merely to point out the evil consequences that will follow it, if it be pursued, which he by no means advises.

7. *joy*] See notes on v. 18 and viii. 15.

now accepteth] Rather, **already has pleasure in.** Joy is here, as elsewhere (ii. 26, v. 19, &c.), regarded as a sign of the approbation and favour of God.

8. White garments and perfume are simply an expressive sign of joy.

9. *wife*] There is no doubt that the word *ishah* is ordinarily used for a wife (as *e.g.* Gen. xi. 29, xxiv. 3, &c.); and here, where the person addressed is described as acceptable to God, and as living all through life with his companion, this translation is to be preferred. The word is undoubtedly applied sometimes to women who are not wives: but that meaning is here forbidden by the context.

10. *with thy might*] The Hebrew accents favour the transposition of these words to a place before "do it." But the LXX., which is of earlier date than the accents, supports our Authorized Version.

no work] Here, as in the preceding and following verses, Solomon is speaking simply of the works which are carried on in this life "under the sun." The works which we carry on here with the combined energies of body and soul come to an end in the hour of death, when the soul enters a new sphere of existence, and body and soul cease to act together. In the same way our Lord speaks (John ix. 4) of the night when no man can work.

device] See notes on vii. 25, 29.

11. *chance*] This word means properly "incident," that which comes to us from without, one of those external events of God's ordering, which Solomon describes in chap. iii. Compare note on ii. 14.

12. *his time*] "The time appointed to man in each relation" (Knobel), or, as Symmachus renders it, "his opportunity." The meaning of the word is explained in iii. 1, and following verses.

13. The order of these words in the Hebrew is slightly different from the A.V., and marks more emphatically the change of subject:—**Also this have I seen—wisdom under the sun, and great it** *seemed* **to me.**

The similarity of the writer's train of thought here and in the second chapter has been already (see note on *vv.* 7—12) pointed out. Here he turns from the contemplation (*vv.* 11, 12) of human ignorance, helplessness, and disappointment, as there (ii. 11, 12) from "vanity and feeding on wind," "to behold wisdom." From this thirteenth verse to the end of the tenth chapter, he inculcates, in a series of proverbs, wisdom in contrast to folly, as the best remedy in the present life to the evil of vanity.

14, 15. It is impossible to say whether any part of this parable is founded on fact. It has no obvious reference to any known

few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:

15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.

rov. 21. p. 7. 19. 16 [d]Then said I, Wisdom *is* better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.

17 The words of wise *men are* heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

18 Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.

CHAPTER X.

1 *Observations of wisdom and folly:* 16 *of riot,* 18 *slothfulness,* 19 *and money.* 20 *Men's thoughts of kings ought to be reverent.*

[†]DEAD flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: *so doth* a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom *and* honour.

† Heb. *Flies of death.*

2 A wise man's heart *is* at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left.

3 Yea also, when he that is a fool

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event in Solomon's time, and may therefore be treated simply as a parable. Comp. iv. 13, and following verses. Even the learned critics who ascribe this book to a late age offer no better suggestion than that the "little city" may be Athens delivered B.C. 480 from the host of Xerxes through the wisdom of Themistocles, or Dora besieged B.C. 218 by Antiochus the Great. The Chaldee Targum explains this passage as an allegory:—"The city is the human body, the great king is an evil desire, the poor man a good disposition." But this is wholly unnecessary.

17. It has been supposed that there is a contradiction between this verse and the preceding. But the inconsistency is not in the writer, but in mankind, who sometimes follow wise advice to their profit, and at other times neglect it. Verses 16 and 17 are merely comments on the two facts—the deliverance of the city and its forgetfulness of him who delivered it—stated in *v.* 15.

18. *sinner*] Rosenmüller points out that this word indicates intellectual as well as moral error.

CHAP. X. The tenth chapter has been described as apparently the most disconnected part of the whole book. The retrospective character of the former part of the book now ceases; and this chapter resembles a portion of the book of Proverbs, consisting entirely of rhythmical sentences giving advice, more or less direct, as to conduct. It is part of the writer's answer to the question proposed in chap. ii. 3, and vi. 12—"What is good for men to do?" The thought which underlies the whole chapter is the advantage of that wisdom which includes piety and patience, as practical guidance through all the perplexities of life: various traits of wisdom are set forth in a favourable light, heightened by contrast with folly. Consistency (*v.* 1) and readiness (*vv.* 2, 3) are attributes of the wise man, also obedience, and submission to authority even though its exercise be accompanied by great abuses (*vv.* 4—7); also caution, preparation to meet with obstacles (*vv.* 8—10); conciliatory speech, in contrast to the loquacity and self-confidence of a fool (*vv.* 11—15); temperance, industry, and government of the tongue, specially in speaking of superiors. Throughout a great part of this chapter the advice seems, in addition to its general application, to have a special reference to servants of a king.

1. *apothecary*] Rather, **dealer in spices** and perfumes. Comp. Exod. xxx. 25. Dr Tristram says, "The swarms of flies in the East very soon corrupt and destroy any moist unguent or mixture which is not carefully covered from them, and pollute a dish of food in a few minutes."

so doth ... honour] Lit. **more weighty than wisdom, than honour, is a little folly**. Knobel, Ewald, Zöckler. The translation in our A.V. is based on a more common signification of the word *yakar*, "him that is in reputation," but it requires a difficult construction. This verse is by its meaning so closely connected with the preceding that the selection of it for the beginning of a new chapter seems unfortunate.

2. The metaphor is variously explained. "A wise man's sense is in its place, ready to help and protect him (comp. ii. 14); but a fool's is missing when it is wanted, and so is useless." Rosenmüller. Knobel's explanation seems less apt, "The understanding or sense of a wise man leads him to embrace and hold fast what is right; that of a fool leads him to what is wrong."

3. *when...way*] Lit. **in the way that the fool walks.** "Way" may be understood either literally, comp. *v.* 15, or figuratively, of the course of action which he follows.

walketh by the way, †his wisdom faileth *him*, and he saith to every one *that* he *is* a fool.

† Heb. *his heart.*

4 If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.

5 There is an evil *which* I have seen under the sun, as an error *which* proceedeth † from the ruler:

† Heb. *from before.*

6 Folly is set † in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.

† Heb. *in great heights.*

7 I have seen servants [a] upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

[a] Prov. 30. 22.

8 [b] He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

[b] Ps. 7. 15. Prov. 26. 27.

9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; *and* he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.

10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom *is* profitable to direct.

11 Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and † a babbler is no better.

† Heb. *the master of the tongue.*

12 [c] The words of a wise man's mouth *are* † gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

[c] Prov. 10. 32. & 12 13.
† Heb. *grace.*

13 The beginning of the words of his mouth *is* foolishness: and the end of † his talk *is* mischievous madness.

† Heb. *his mouth*

14 [d] A fool also † is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and

[d] Prov. 15. 2.
† Heb. *multiplieth words.*

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he is] "He" refers either to "the fool," "he exposes his folly to every one he meets;" or else to "every one" = "he thinks all persons he meets fools." The former sense seems preferable. Comp. Prov. xvii. 28.

4. *spirit*] The rising up of the spirit is equivalent to anger, as in Judg. viii. 3, &c.

leave not thy place] *i.e.* do not lose thy self-control and quit his presence; comp. viii. 3. Gentleness on thy part will calm both thyself and him, and prevent great wrongs being committed by either.

5. *as*] Or, "seemingly," Ewald. Perhaps the conjunction may be used by way of extenuating this imputation on rulers.

6, 7. The "evil" of *v.* 5 is here specified as that caprice of a king by which, as sometimes happens, an unworthy favourite of low origin is promoted to successive dignities, while a noble (comp. "rich" in *v.* 20) person is degraded or neglected.

8—10. The figures in these verses seem to be taken from the work of building up and pulling down houses. They may have, in connection with the preceding verses, a special reference to the measures taken by a king's servants to advance their own fortunes. But they are capable of a more general application, as recommending the man who would act wisely to be cautious when taking any step in life which involves risk.

8. *breaketh an hedge*] Rather, **breaks through a wall.**

serpent] The habit of snakes to nestle in a chink of a wall, or among stones, is referred to in Amos v. 19; Isai. xxxiv. 15.

9. *be endangered*] Rather, **cut himself.**

10. The figure of cleaving wood is continued from the preceding verse.

is profitable to direct] Or, "affords the profit of success." So, in substance, Knobel, Heiligstedt, Vaihinger: but it is scarcely an improvement on the A.V.

11. *Surely...better*] Rather, **If a serpent without enchantment** (*i.e.* not being enchanted) **bites, then there is no advantage to the charmer:** *i.e.* if the charmer is unwisely slack in exercising his craft, he will be bitten like other people. "The art of serpent-charming referred to in Ps. lviii. 4 (where see note), and James iii. 7, is of immense antiquity, and is practised not only in Africa, but in India. The resources of the charmers appear to be very simple—the shrill notes of a flute, which are the only kind of tones that the serpent with its imperfect sense of sound is capable of following: and, above all, coolness and courage combined with gentleness in handling the animal, so as not to irritate it. The charmers are not impostors ... Instances are not uncommon in which, with all their care, the jugglers' lives are sacrificed in the exhibition." Dr Tristram, 'Nat. Hist. of the Bible,' p. 272.

14. *is full of words*] It would seem from the context that confident talking of the future is indicated rather than mere loquacity. Professor Lewis quotes Rashi's explanation, "the fool is full of words, deciding confidently, and saying 'to-morrow I will do so and so,' when he knoweth not what shall be on the morrow; or when he would undertake a journey for gain, and knoweth not that he may fall by the sword:" and he adds that this verse so understood and the following

chap. 3. 22. & 6. 12. [e] what shall be after him, who can tell him?

15 The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.

Isai. 3. 4. 16 ¶ [f] Woe to thee, O land, when thy king *is* a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!

17 Blessed *art* thou, O land, when thy king *is* the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!

18 ¶ By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.

19 ¶ A feast is made for laughter, and [g] wine [†] maketh merry: but money answereth all *things*.

20 ¶ [h] Curse not the king, no not in thy [‖] thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

g Ps. 104. 15. † Heb. *maketh glad the life.* h Exod. 22. 28. ‖ Or, *conscience.*

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Directions for charity.* 7 *Death in life,* 9 *and the day of judgment in the days of youth, are to be thought on.*

CAST thy bread [†] upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after [a] many days.

2 Give a portion to seven, and also

† Heb. *upon the face of the waters.* a Deut. 15. 10. Prov. 19. 17. Matth. 10. 42.

verse may have suggested the words of St James, iv. 13.

15. *The labour...them*] Lit. **A fool's labour wearies him.**

to go to the city] The sense is, "the fool wearies himself with ineffectual attempts, he has not sufficient knowledge for the transaction of ordinary business."

16—20. Proverbs addressed, as are some previous verses in this chapter, more particularly to rulers and subjects, and designed to dissuade from folly and to inculcate wisdom. Foolish rulers, by their weakness, self-indulgence and sloth, bring decay upon the state: nobleness and temperance insure prosperity: yet the subject must not rebel in word or thought against his king.

16. *a child*] Rather, **young.** The same word, as Bp. Wordsworth observes, is applied to Rehoboam, 2 Chro. xiii. 7, at the time of his accession to the throne, when he was 41 years old.

eat in the morning] A sign of intemperance: comp. Isai. v. 11.

17. *son of nobles*] *i.e.* of a noble disposition. Compare the similar idiom "prince's daughter," Song of Sol. vii. 1.

18. In this verse, as in Isai. iii. 6 and Amos ix. 10, the building or house is used in a metaphorical sense. Here it represents the state.

much slothfulness] Lit. **two idle** hands.

droppeth through] *i.e.* lets the rain through the roof.

19. Lit. **For merriment they make a feast** (= bread), **and wine gladdens** (compare Ps. civ. 15) **the living, and money supplies** (compare Hosea ii. 23) **all things.**

20. *Curse*] Compare vii. 21, 22.

rich] *i.e.* the noble, as in verse 6.

bedchamber] So in 2 K. vi. 12.

matter] Lit. **word** or tale.

CHAP. XI. There ought to be no division between x. 20 and xi. 1. There the reader was addressed as a subject, and was advised wisely to endure in silence the selfish luxury and sloth of rulers; and here he is advised that it belongs to a wise man to use his substance in acts of benevolence (1, 2), and to increase or earn it by steady labour in a spirit of pious trustfulness without anxiously calculating the probability of adequate recompense, or complete results, which are in the hands of God (4—6). An active life in the fear of God is encouraged by another consideration, namely, the transitory nature of our powers and our time for leading such a life (7, 8): and young men particularly are admonished (9, 10) to bear in mind the account which God takes of all their actions, and the certainty of a just recompense from Him.

1, 2. As if in contrast to the self-indulgence which was described in x. 16—19, the opposite virtue, readiness to give to others, is here inculcated. The use of the word "bread" in both x. 19 and xi. 1 serves to point the contrast.

1. *Cast...waters*] Lit. "Send thy bread upon the face of the waters." The phrase occurs in Isai. xviii. 2, where it refers to ships; and hence Pfeiffer and others understand this verse to signify that the return of hospitality is as uncertain as the coming back of a ship in which a merchant trusts his substance to the sea. But this is not necessarily implied.

bread] Bread was usually made in thin crisp round cakes which would float on a stream or on the sea. The verse means, "Shew hospitality, even though the corre-

to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

5 As thou knowest not what *is* the way of the spirit, *nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

6 In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether † shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both *shall be* alike good.

† Heb. *shall be right.*

7 ¶ Truly the light *is* sweet, and a pleasant *thing it is* for the eyes to behold the sun:

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sponding return of hospitality to you seem improbable; yet be hospitable in faith." The same advice is enforced by a Christian motive in Luke xiv. 13 14, and compare Heb. xiii. 2. Knobel quotes from Diez an Arabic proverb, "Cast forth thy bread on the water, some time it shall be returned to thee." But it is not clear why bread should be cast upon the water: and hence some interpreters not unreasonably understand by "bread" the seed from the produce of which bread is made. Seed cast upon the fertile soil flooded by the early rains would be returned to the sower in autumn with large increase.

2. The verse means, "Let your hospitality and your alms be extensive: for you know not what reverses may befall either that person who by your liberality will be strengthened to meet them, or yourself who may come to need grateful friends." With reference to the last suggestion, compare Luke xvi. 9.

seven, and also to eight] A definite number for an indefinite, as in Mic. v. 5 and elsewhere.

3—6. "Unforeseen events come from God; and the man who is always gazing on the uncertain future will neither begin nor complete any useful work: but do thou bear in mind that times and circumstances, the powers of nature and the results to which they minister, are in the hand of God; and be both diligent and trustful." This passage is connected with the preceding verse: there is a reference underlying both to the laws of the divine government which, unknown to man, regulate both the rewards of liberality and the rewards of labour. The images in at least *vv.* 3, 4 and 6, are connected chiefly with the occupation of an agricultural labourer: the discharge of rain from the cloud, and the inclination of the falling tree, and the direction of the wind, are beyond his control, though the result of his work is affected by them. There is nothing in the text to indicate that the common application of the image of the fallen tree to the state of departed souls (see St Bernard, 'Sermones de Diversis,' LXXXV.) was in the mind of the inspired writer.

5. *spirit*] This translation is supported by the Septuagint, Vulgate and Targum. The reference in *v.* 4 to our ignorance of the way of the wind might suggest to a Hebrew writer this reference to our ignorance of the way of the Divine Spirit; for the same Hebrew word *Ruach* (which in this respect exactly equals *Pneuma* in Greek, and resembles *Ghost* in English) signifies both the Wind and the Spirit. And as in John iii. 8, so here, the same word is used in both these senses within the compass of a few lines. The Old Testament in many places recognizes the special operation of God, Job x. 8—12: Ps. cxxxix. 13—16; Jer. i. 5, and distinctly of the Spirit of God, Job xxxi. 15, in the origination of every child. Compare the account of the first creation, Gen. ii. 7.

If the grammatical connection of the first clause of *v.* 5 were with *v.* 4, it would afford ground for preferring the translation "way of the wind" (Grotius, Rosenmüller, Knobel, Ewald and others). But the grammatical connection of the first clause is with that which follows; and there is a parallelism between (1) the way of the spirit, (2) the growth of the bones, and (3) the works of God.

7—xii. 8. The preceding exhortation to a life of labour in the sight of God is still carried on. It is now addressed specially to the active and the young; and is enforced by another consideration, namely, the transitory character of all that sustains youth in activity, which will be succeeded by old age, when the sense of beauty is impaired, strength fails, death impends, and the spirit returns to God to Whom it is responsible.

7. *the light,...the sun*] These may be taken in a literal sense as the gifts of God which cheer man's toil, but which he almost ceases to appreciate in his old age. This seems more in harmony with the preceding context than

8 But if a man live many years, *and* rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh *is* vanity.

9 ¶ Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these *things* God will bring thee into judgment.

10 Therefore remove [1]sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth *are* vanity.

[1] Or, *anger*

CHAPTER XII.

1 *The Creator is to be remembered in due time.* 8 *The preacher's care to edify.* 13 *The fear of God is the chief antidote of vanity.*

REMEMBER [a]now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

[a] Prov. 22. 6.

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taking them only as figurative expressions (so Knobel, Zöckler and others) denoting life. Compare Dean Church's 'Essay on Dante,' p. 99.

8. *days of darkness*] Comparing this expression with xii. 2 it seems best to understand it as denoting primarily the time of old age, and perhaps secondarily any time of sorrow or misfortune (= "adversity" vii. 14). Knobel, Zöckler and others take it as meaning the grave: but the expression "day of darkness" always (Job iii. 4, xv. 23; Joel ii. 2, &c.) refers to a season of temporal calamity.

All that cometh] That is, simply, "the future," which must not be reckoned on by the active man, as if his present state of healthy energy were to continue. Compare the equally comprehensive expressions ii. 23 and vii. 15.

9. *Rejoice...cheer...walk*] Here as in ix. 7 (where see note) the imperative mood is used, not exactly to express a command, but rather to encourage one who possesses certain gifts from God to remember that they come from God and are to be used in accordance with His will.

in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes] We are justified in understanding these words in an innocent sense by such passages as Eccl. ii. 10; Prov. xvi. 9, xxiii. 19; but they are undeniably used most frequently in a bad sense, as in Num. xv. 39; 1 Joh. ii. 16, &c.

judgment] This word does not signify merely in the abstract the decision which God will form on a man's actions; but rather, in the concrete, that change of circumstances which in consequence of such decision will happen to man: compare viii. 5, 6 and iii. 17. It has been asked whether judgment in this life or judgment in the next is here referred to. There is nothing in the word itself to exclude either meaning or both. The question therefore resolves itself into this,—Did the Preacher believe in a life of some kind in the presence of God, beyond the grave? This question is answered in the affirmative by xii. 7. These two passages taken together afford the strongest presumption, which is confirmed by xii. 14, that his reference here includes a judgment beyond the grave; though doubtless his view of it was dim and indefinite if compared with a Christian's.

10. *remove sorrow*, &c.] The sense appears to be, "let the timely recollection of God's judgment, and of the fleeting character of youth, so influence your conduct that you will refrain from acts which entail future remorse and pain."

CHAP. XII. The advice to lead an active life in the fear of God is here farther enforced on the young by the consideration (1—7) of the circumstances which accompany old age, when activity gradually becomes less and less possible, and finally ceases altogether so far as this world is concerned. Referring to his theme (8) at the beginning of the book, the Preacher strives (9—12) to conciliate attention to what he has written, and sums up (13, 14) his practical advice, and enforces it by declaring that everything will be brought into judgment by God.

1. *Remember now*] Rather, **And remember.** The connection between this verse and the preceding one is unfortunately interrupted by our division of chapters. "Now" is simply a copulative, not an adverb of time.

Creator] Gratitude to God as Creator (compare xi. 5) is here inculcated as was previously (xi. 9) fear of God as Judge. In one word, godliness, acquired as a habit in youth, is recommended as the proper compensation for that natural cessation of youthful happiness which makes the *days* of old age more or less *evil;* more evil in proportion as there is less of godliness in the heart, and less evil where there is more godliness.

while the evil days come not] Rather, **before the evil days come.** The same expression occurs in verses 1, 2, and 6. In the last it is translated "or ever." Here as in *v.* 2 it marks the transition from youth to old age.

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and [1] the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

[1] Or, *the grinders fail, because they grind little.*

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low;

5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper

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evil days] *i.e.* the season of old age. Compare xi. 8. This expression, coupled as it is with pleasureless "years," cannot possibly mean only the day of death as distinct from the season of old age: indeed it does not necessarily include any reference to the day of death.

2 *While...not*] Or, **Before.** And, *or—or—or—nor*, should be translated **and** in each case.

darkened] The darkening of the lights of heaven denotes a time of affliction and sadness. Compare Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8; Job iii. 9; Isai. v. 30, &c. This representation of old age is addressed to a youth who requires warning. It should be contrasted with the encouraging description in 2 S. xxiii. 4, 5 of the lifetime of a godly and just man under the corresponding figures of a dawn without clouds, and sunshine after rain.

3—6. The body in old age and death is here described under the figure of a decaying house with its inmates and furniture. See Note A. The human body is represented as a tent or house in Job iv. 19; Isai. xxxviii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 1; 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.

3. This verse is best understood as referring to the change which old age brings to four parts of the body, the arms, the legs, the teeth and the eyes.

keepers] Keeping the house was an important office; see Luke xi. 21; Matt. xxiv. 43 and Ps. cxxi. 4, 5. Galen quoted by Knobel speaks of the hands as arming and keeping the body.

bow] Compare "bowing knees," Job iv. 4 A.V. margin. The legs are specially taken as the symbol of strength in a young and vigorous man, Ps. cxlvii. 10; Song of Sol. v. 15. Compare also the contrary expression, "feeble knees," Isai. xxxv. 3; Heb. xii. 12, &c.

grinders] Grinding was an occupation of female servants, Exod. xi. 5; Matt. xxiv. 41.

windows] A frequent resource in an Oriental house of the women, Judg. v. 28, who here represent the eyes.

4. *And the doors...is low*] Here the house is viewed from without. The way of entry and exit is stopped: little or no sound issues forth to tell of life stirring within. The old man as he grows older has less in common with the rising generation; mutual interest and intercourse decline. If a distinct counterpart in the body were required to the doors and the sound of the mill, those terms might be taken as figures of the lips and ears and the speech, but this is not necessary.

he shall rise...bird] Here the metaphor of the house passes out of sight. The verb may either be taken impersonally (= "they shall rise," compare the next verse), so Knobel; or as definitely referring to an old man, possibly the master of the house, rising out of sleep (compare Prov. vi. 9) at the first sound in the morning.

all the daughters of musick] Lit. "all daughters of the song," *i.e.* songstresses, singing women, ii. 8 and 2 S. xix. 35.

be brought low] *i.e.* sound faintly in the ears of old age.

5. *Also when...way*] These two phrases doubtless indicate the timidity which characterizes old age. The word translated *high* is used elsewhere, v. 7, vii. 8, to denote the powerful and the proud, such persons as an old man in his timidity might shrink from opposing or meeting: or it is otherwise understood to denote high ground which old men would avoid ascending.

fears...in the way] Compare Prov. xxvi. 13.

the almond tree shall flourish] This translation is supported by the ancient versions. Dr Thomson ('The Land and the Book,' p. 319) says of the almond tree, "It is the type of old age whose hair is white,...the white blossoms completely cover the whole tree; the green leaves do not appear till some time after." Many modern critics translate, "the almond shall be despised," *i.e.* pleasant food shall be no longer relished.

the grasshopper] Rather, **the locust.** The *chāgāb*, rendered *grasshopper* here and Lev. xi. 22, Num. xiii. 33, and Isai. xl. 22, appears to have been a small kind of locust used for food: it became in late Hebrew a collective name for the locust tribe. See Tristram, 'Nat. Hist. of Bible,' p. 311. The clause means either that heaviness and stiffness shall take the place of that active motion for which the locust is conspicuous; or, as some understand it, that common food shall be no longer agreeable. The former sense is more generally received.

shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 [b] Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

8 ¶ [c] Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all *is* vanity.

9 And [1] moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave

[b] Gen. 3. 19.
[c] chap. 1. 2.
[1] Or, *the more wise the preacher was*, &c.

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desire] Lit. **the caper-berry**. This berry, which was eaten before meals as a provocative to appetite, shall fail to take effect on a man whose powers are exhausted.

long home] Lit. "eternal house." Considering that the word "eternal" may be used here in a restricted sense (see note on i. 4), the expression *long home* (which has become a household word among ourselves) appears to represent the Hebrew fairly.

Man's "eternal house" is his place in the next world. To interpret it simply of the grave would be inconsistent with the statement in *v.* 7 of the return of the spirit to God: nor can that interpretation be established by the use of the word "house" for the grave in Job xxx. 23, and Isai. xiv. 18, or by the application of the term "eternal house" to the grave in the Targum on Isai. xlii. 11, or by the modern use of it as a title of Jewish burial-grounds. *Bit edi*, "House of Eternity," is a name given in a cuneiform inscription to Hades, the world of disembodied spirits ('Transactions of Society of Biblical Archæology,' 1873, p. 188). Without attributing to the author of Ecclesiastes that deep insight into the future life which is shewn by the writer of the Epistles to the Corinthians, we may observe that He by Whom both writers were inspired sanctions in both books (see 2 Cor. v. 1—6) the use of the same expression "eternal house." In 2 Cor. it means that spiritual body which shall be hereafter; and it is placed, as it is here (see *v.* 3), in contrast with that earthly dissolving house which clothes the spirit of man in this world.

mourners] It is the custom of singing women to attend funerals for hire, see Jer. ix. 17; 2 Chro. xxxv. 25; Matt. ix. 23, &c.

6. *be loosed*] The termination of life is signified generally by the breaking of a lamp, a pitcher, and a wheel: it seems unnecessary to assign to those images respectively different parts or functions of the body, all which end at death. The silver cord by which the lamp hangs from the ceiling snaps, and the cup or reservoir of oil is dashed in pieces by the fall, and the pitcher long used to bring water from the spring is shattered; and the wheel by which a bucket is let down into the well is broken. Delitzsch, 'Psychology,' ch. IV. § 10, propounds a new interpretation of the symbolical meaning of these terms: according to him the silver cord is the soul which holds the body in life, the bowl is the body, and the golden oil (compare Zech. iv. 12) within it is the spirit. His conjectural explanation of the other figures is less happy.

7. *Then shall the dust return*] The creation of man as described in Gen. ii. 7 (compare iii. 19) is evidently referred to.

the spirit shall return] The fact here stated by the inspired writer is simply that the spirit, being separated at death from the body, returns to God. No more is said here of its future destiny. To return to God, Who is the Fountain (Ps. xxxvi. 9) of Life, certainly means to continue to live. The doctrine of life after death is implied here as in Exod. iii. 6 (compare Mark xii. 27), Ps. xvii. 15 (where see note), and in many other passages of Scripture earlier than the age of Solomon: see Dr Pusey on Daniel, Lecture VIII. page 494. The inference that the soul loses its personality and is absorbed into something else (Warburton, Le Clerc, Knobel, Hitzig) has no warrant in this or any other statement in this book, and would be inconsistent with the announcement of a judgment after death which, as Knobel acknowledges, is implied in *v.* 14. "The spirit of every man after death, good or bad, in some sense goes to God either as a Father or as a Judge, to be kept somewhere under the custody of His Almighty power, in order to the receiving of His final sentence at the last judgment either of happiness or misery." Bp. Bull, Sermon II.

8—14. This passage is properly regarded as the Epilogue of the whole book: see Note B.

Here, as in the beginning of the book, i. 1, 2, the Preacher speaks of himself (*vv.* 8, 9, 10) in the third person. He first repeats (*v.* 8) the mournful, perplexing theme with which his musings began (i. 2); and then states the encouraging practical conclusion, 13, 14, to which they have led him. Between these he interposes four *vv.*, 9—12, asserting his claim to come forward as a teacher, his intention to teach with no unnecessary obscurity, the usefulness and authority of such teaching, and the folly of protracted, unpractical meditation (comp. xi. 4): this brings him to the practical end, *vv.* 13, 14, of the Epilogue and of the whole book.

9. *And moreover*] The same word begins

[d] 1 Kin. 4. 32. good heed, and sought out, *and* [d] set in order many proverbs.

10 The preacher sought to find out [†] acceptable words: and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth.

† Heb. *words of delight.*

11 The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much [1] study *is* a weariness of the flesh.

[1] Or, *reading.*

13 ¶ [1] Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.

[1] Or, *The end of the matter, even all that hath been heard, is.*

14 For [e] God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

[e] Rom. 2. 16. & 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10.

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v. 12, where it is rendered "And further." Knobel proposes here a slightly different translation, "And besides that the Preacher was wise, he also taught," &c.

11. *The words...shepherd*] Lit. **Words of wise men are as goads, and as nails driven in [*by*] masters of assemblies; they are given from one shepherd:** *goads*, because they rouse the hearer and impel him to right actions (Rosenmüller); *nails* (perhaps *tent-spikes*, Ginsburg), because they remain fixed in the memory. *Masters of assemblies* (compare the expressions "master of the tongue," "master of wings," x. 11, 20) are simply *teachers* or *preachers*, the conveners (see note to i. 1) and instructors of such assemblies as Wisdom addresses, Prov. i. 20, &c.

one shepherd] *i.e.* God, Who is the supreme Giver of wisdom, Prov. ii. 6, and the chief Shepherd, Jer. xxiii. 1—4. Compare the statement of another inspired teacher, 1 Cor. ii. 12, 13, "We have received the Spirit that is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, which things also we speak."

12. *these*] *i.e.* "words of wise men."

books] Rather, "writings." The word may be used to describe any short document, as a bill of divorcement, Deut. xxiv. 1, or a letter, 2 S. xi. 15, and it does not necessarily mean a volume. Probably the Preacher is still referring to the "words of wise men," *i.e.* the proverbs current in his age, including, though not specially indicating, his own.

13. *Let us hear...matter*] Lit. "The conclusion of the discourse" (or "word," = words i. 1), "the whole, let us hear." Observe, "the whole" stands in apposition to "the conclusion of the discourse;" and it is repeated in the next clause.

the whole duty of man] Rather, **the whole man.** So the Septuagint, Vulgate, Ewald, Herzfeld and others. "To fear God and to obey Him is the whole man, constitutes man's whole being; that only is conceded to Man; all other things, as this book again and again teaches, are dependent on a Higher Incomprehensible Being." Herzfeld.

14. *judgment*] Knobel argues fairly from the expressions "every work" and "every secret thing" (compare Rom. ii. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 5) that the Preacher here means an appointed judgment which shall take place in another world, as distinct from that retribution which frequently follows man's actions in the course of this world, and which is too imperfect (compare ii. 15, iv. 1, vii. 15, ix. 2, &c.) to be described by these expressions. Bp. Butler's dissertation 'Of the moral government of God,' 'Analogy,' Pt. I. ch. iii., throws much light on this subject.

with] Rather, [*which shall be held*] **upon.** Bp. Bull (Sermon IX.) observes on the last two verses, "He that is fully convinced of these two things, that there is no solid happiness to be found in this world, and that there is a world to come wherein God will adjudge men to an everlasting state either of happiness or misery respectively, as they have made their choice and acted here, must necessarily subscribe to the truth of Solomon's conclusion, that true religion is the only way to true happiness."

NOTE A.

On the Allegorical Description of Old Age, Chap. xii. 1—7.

Three different interpretations of this passage have been proposed:—

1. The Jewish traditional interpretation recorded in the Targum was introduced to the Christian Church by Jerome, and has been followed by almost all expositors since his time. It treats these verses as an allegorical description of old age with its natural infirmities and solitariness, partly (*vv.* 3, 4)

indicating the several members of the enfeebled body under the image of the servants and master of a decaying house, and partly stating the characteristic actions and feelings of an aged man, and ending with his death (*vv.* 4—7). It is not a parable like the passage ix. 14, but an allegory in which the thing signified and the thing signifying are blended together. Unfortunately the ingenuity of some expositors deficient in taste has been exercised in assigning a precise meaning to every obscure allusion (see Bp. Lowth, 'Prælectio' x.), and has imported inconsistency, coarseness, and absurdity into a touching allegory. The judicious paraphrase of this passage by Bishop Hall ('Hard Texts,' in his Works, ed. 1808, Vol. III. p. 270) is almost entirely free from those faults, but too well known to need insertion here.

2. Elster, following Umbreit and followed by Dr Ginsburg, sees no reference to old age after the first verse, and regards the second and following verses as describing the approach of death under the image of a terrible tempest which strikes fear into the inmates of a lordly mansion. But it seems evident that the terms of *v.* 2 describe rather a gloomy sky than a terrible tempest: and such common atmospheric phenomena cannot be connected, as cause with effect, with the uncommon consequences mentioned in *vv.* 3—6. Elster argues that the singular "day" in *v.* 3 must refer to a distinct day, and not to a protracted period as the season of old age. But there are frequent instances of the use of the singular "day" for a long period; *e.g.* in the well-known passage Gen. ii. 4 it describes a period which is described just before as consisting of six days, just as here, in *v.* 3, it describes a period which was described in *v.* 1 as consisting of days and years.

3. The early Christian Fathers, Gregory Thaumaturgus ('Metaphrasis') and Cyril of Jerusalem ('Catechesis,' xv. 20), understood this passage simply as a description of "the great and terrible day of God," "the coming of the Lord and the end of the world." This interpretation is mentioned with others by Jerome, Olympiodorus and Rupert of Deutz. But although *vv.* 2 and 3 taken from the context and read in connection with Matt. xxv. 29 are capable of being thus applied, yet it is impossible to carry on this interpretation through the next three verses even in the Septuagint translation. It has gradually given place to the allegorical interpretation mentioned above.

NOTE B.

THE GENUINENESS OF THE PASSAGE, CHAP. XII. 9—14.

These verses have the same authority with the Christian reader as the rest of this book; for they were received as an integral part of the book by the Jewish Church long before the time of our Lord. Towards the end of the last century their genuineness was called in question; and although the sameness of the style and diction was not denied, it was alleged that they were not written by the author of the book, but were added by some unknown editor in a later age. The principal advocate of that view is Knobel, whose arguments in support of it may be thus stated and answered: (*a*) "The whole addition is superfluous and has no aim." The obvious aim of the author is to give here (*vv.* 13, 14) the full answer, part only of which is given previously (iii. 17 and vii. 18), to the practical difficulty stated in the beginning (i. 2, 3) and frequently repeated. Moreover he seems to offer here an apology for the obscurity of many sayings in this book. The whole passage therefore serves to make the book more intelligible and more acceptable. (*b*) "In this addition the writer is spoken of in the third person." So he is in the beginning of the book i. 2: indeed the first person does not appear till i. 12. (*c*) "The fear of God and piety, here set forth (*v.* 13) as the end of all teaching, are not the end to which the former chapters tend." It only seems so to the objector who, having arbitrarily assigned an Epicurean meaning to former chapters, naturally fails to see their connection with this conclusion to which no such meaning can be assigned. (*d*) "The notion (*v.* 14) of God holding a future set judgment is inconsistent with the Preacher's view (iii. 17, v. 8, xi. 9) of retribution being restricted to the natural consequences of man's actions." But there is nothing in those passages which implies that retribution is restricted to this life only: rather the Preacher's argument, which supposes a complete retribution, seems to require the notion of a judgment after death. (*e*) "The expression, *no end of making books*, would hardly be used by a Jew in the Persian period." Unless it were proved that the Preacher lived in the Persian period this remark has no force. But the expression as it stands is perfectly natural in the mouth of the writer (1 K. iv. 32, 33) of three thousand proverbs and a thousand and five songs. Indeed Grätz points out that this Epilogue assumes the identity of the Preacher with the writer of the book of Proverbs.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

INTRODUCTION.

1. POSITION IN THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE.

"THE Song of Songs which is Solomon's," so designated by its most ancient (Hebrew) title, holds a unique position in sacred, as indeed it would in any other literature. It may be said to be the enigma of the Old Testament, as the Apocalypse is of the New. No other book of Scripture bears even a remote resemblance to it, and none (the Apocalypse not excepted) has so grievously suffered from the caprice and prejudice of innumerable commentators.

Its canonicity, if not wholly unchallenged even in early times[1], is abundantly attested by primitive witnesses and the most ancient sanctions of ecclesiastical authority, which leave no room for reasonable doubt that the Song was regarded as an integral and venerated portion of the Hebrew canon before the commencement of the Christian era, and that it passed as such into the canon of the primitive Church. While this Book has been from the first subjected to very diverse interpretations, and although occasional assaults were made, even in early times, on its sacred character, it has nevertheless been always held both by the Church and by the Synagogue in the highest and most reverent estimation. The testimony on this point of the celebrated Rabbi Akiba as reported in the Mishnah ('Iadaim,' III. 5) expresses the general judgment of Jewish schools and doctors in the first and second centuries, and claims to represent that of a much earlier period: "Peace and mercy!" he exclaims in reply to an inquirer, "No man in Israel ever doubted the canonicity of the Song of Songs, for the course of ages cannot vie with the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel; all the Kethubim (Hagiographa) are indeed a holy thing, but the Song of Songs is a holy of holies." A similar witness is borne by the earliest Christian expositors to the religious estimation in which this book was held by the Church of the second, third, and fourth centuries: "The whole body of this Scripture," says the father of Christian exegesis, "is made up of mystic utterances" (Origen, 'Prolog. in Cant. Cantic.' interpr. Rufino); and again, in another place, after enumerating six of the chief Songs of

[1] Theodoret ('Præf. in Expos. Cant. Canticor.') mentions several theories, broached in his day as to the original purpose of the Song, which have been renewed in modern times, *e.g.* that it was a collection of love dialogues between Solomon and some maiden (Abishag the Shunamite or Pharaoh's daughter), or that it was an allegory of Solomon's relation to the Commonwealth of Israel. The last theory was adopted by Luther. See also the passage quoted from the Mishnah ('Iadaim,' III. 5), and the Canon of Junilius (cir. A.D. 560) in Hody, 'de Bibliorum textibus original.' Lib. IV. p. 653.

Holy Scripture, the Song of the Red Sea (Exod. xv.), the Song of the Well (Num. xxi. 17, 18), of Moses (Deut. xxxii.), of Deborah (Judg. v.), of David (Ps. xviii.), of Isaiah (Isai. v.), and assigning to each its special significance in reference to the spiritual life, he thus proceeds: "When thou hast passed through all these, thou must mount yet higher to sing with the Bridegroom this Song of Songs." ('Hom.' I. interpr. Hieronymo.) In the Book of Proverbs, according to St Jerome, the young are taught the duties of life; in Ecclesiastes the middle-aged the vanity of earthly things; in Canticles the perfected, who have the world beneath their feet, are joined to the embraces of the heavenly Bridegroom. ('Comment. in Eccles.' I. 1.)

It must be confessed that if we seek for similar evidence of such an estimation of the character and meaning of this book in other parts of Scripture we shall be disappointed. One or two allusions have been found in the Song to at least one older canonical book (Genesis), and a few references to it in books of later composition (Proverbs, Isaiah, Hosea)[1]; while two or three doubtful allusions have been thought to be made to it by writers of the New Testament. But these references, even if sufficient to establish the recognition of the Song as a part of Holy Scripture by some among the canonical writers, would be quite inadequate to determine its interpretation, or supersede the necessity for independent inquiry on the part of the expositor.

2. Form of Composition and general Characteristics.

The difficulties of the interpreter of the Song are unusually great. One lies in the peculiar form of composition. The Song of Songs might be called a lyrico-dramatic poem, but it is really *sui generis*, and not a drama in the sense that it was either intended or adapted for representation. To use the words of a medieval commentator (Aquinas)[2], "this Book is in one respect most obscure, that though written in a dramatic style no mention is made of the different speakers." We are left to determine by internal evidence alone the number, character, and speeches of the *dramatis personæ*, the action delineated or implied, the main drift and purpose of the whole composition, and its ethical or typical significance. Any conclusions therefore at which the student may arrive on such points should be expressed with moderation and maintained with humility.

One point in starting may be assumed as settled by the consent of almost all recent critics: the Song is not, as some have maintained, an anthology or collection of poems and fragments by various authors[3], but (as its Hebrew title indicates) a single poem, the work of one author. It is "the Song of Songs," the most excellent of all Songs; and "of Solomon," having Solomon for its author or its subject. The old popular renderings of this title, "Cantica," "Canticles," or "Songs of Solomon," were consequently as to the plural form inexact and misleading. And yet even that plural might be defended as calling attention to the obvious fact that, though the Song is a well-organized poetical whole, its unity is made up of various parts and sections, of which several have so much independence and individuality as to have been not inaptly called Idylls, *i.e.* short poetic pieces of various forms containing each a distinct subject of representation. These shorter pieces are all, however, so closely linked by a common purpose, as to form, when viewed in their right connection, constituent parts of a larger and complete poem. To distinguish these parts, and observe the relation in which they stand to one another and the general subject, is a primary duty of the

[1] Delitzsch finds the following references and resemblances in the Song to Genesis: *a.* Song vii. 11 compared with Gen. iv. 8. *b.* Song iv. 11, Gen. xxvii. 27. *c.* Song viii. 6, Gen. xlix. 7. *d.* Song vi. 13 (see note in Commentary), Gen. xxxii. 2. *e.* Song vii. 13, Gen. xxx. 14. On the other hand he holds it quite certain that the author of Proverbs i.—ix., whom he places in the time of Jehoshaphat, had read the Song. He reckons four clear references—Prov. v. 15 foll., Song iv. 11. Prov. vii. 17, Song iv. 14. Prov. v. 3, Song iv. 11; and especially Prov. vi. 30 foll. he regards as an indubitable reminiscence of Song viii. 6 foll.

[2] "Est in hoc obscurissimus iste liber, quia nullæ ibi commemorantur personæ, cum tamen stylo quasi comico sit compositus."

[3] The most extravagant maintainer of this hypothesis is Magnus ('Kritische Bearbeitung,' &c. Halle 1842), who makes the Song consist of 14 distinct poems, beside sundry fragments and additions.

careful interpreter, who, in making his division, will be guided, partly by observation of poetical structure and sequences of thought, and partly by refrains and recurrent phrases, used it would seem of set purpose by the author of the poem to indicate the commencement or the close of its various sections.

The earliest Jewish expositor of the Song as a whole, the author of the so-called Chaldee Targum, divides it in his historico-prophetic interpretation into two nearly equal halves at ch. v. 1. All that precedes the close of that verse he makes refer to the times of the Exodus and of the first Temple, and all that follows to times subsequent to the deportation to Babylon down to the final restoration of Israel and the glories of the latter day. Whatever we may think of this allegorical interpretation, the division itself of the Song into two remarkably contrasted and corresponding halves (i. 2—v. 1, and v. 2—viii. 14), though little observed by modern expositors, will be found to accord exactly with what on other grounds appears to be its genuine historical sense, and may, with other divisions (suggested by the refrains just referred to), prove a valuable clue in the hand of a careful student to the true significance of the whole.

The two most important of these refrains are, first, the Bride's threefold Adjuration to the Chorus (ii. 7, iii. 5, and viii. 4), marking at each place, as most interpreters agree, the close of one division of the poem; secondly, the Question asked three times by a Chorus on as many distinct appearances of the Bride (iii. 6, vi. 10, and viii. 5), marking, in like manner, a fresh commencement. These two refrains enable us to divide each half of the Song into three parts of nearly equal length, and make the whole poem consist of six parts; an arrangement which, in its main features, has obtained a majority of suffrages among modern interpreters. Each of these parts, on a closer view, will be found to break up into two or three smaller sections, some quite idyllic in their character, and capable of being regarded as distinct little poems (*e.g.* ii. 8—17, iii. 1—5, v. 2—8). And here again we find other recurrent phrases, *e.g.* "Behold, thou art fair," &c. (i. 15, iv. 1, 7, vi. 4, vii. 6), which is a formula of commencement; and the following formulæ of conclusion, "His left hand underneath my head," &c. (ii. 6, viii. 3); "Flee, my beloved," &c.; and "I am my beloved's," &c. (ii. 16, 17, vii. 10, viii. 14). These shorter refrains, aided by other observations, will prove useful guides in further subdivision.

The Song is throughout so far dramatic in form that it consists entirely of dialogue or monologue, the writer nowhere speaking in his own person; and the dialogue is connected with the development of a certain action. There are, we believe, only three chief speakers, "the Bride[1]," "the Beloved," and a Chorus of "Virgins" or "Daughters of Jerusalem[2]," having each their own manner and peculiar words and phrases, and these so carefully adhered to as to help us, in some cases of doubt, to determine the particular speaker (see note on i. 8). The Bride constantly repeats her favourite phrases; *e.g.* the Adjuration (ii. 7, &c.), and a similar formula at v. 8; "I am my Beloved's," &c. (ii. 16, vi. 3, vii. 10, compare viii. 10); "Flee" (or "turn"), "my Beloved," &c. (ii. 17, viii. 14); her Beloved is a "Shepherd," who "feeds" his flock (i. 7) "among lilies" (ii. 16, vi. 3). The Beloved, on the other hand, repeatedly employs the same terms in addressing the Bride; *e.g.* "My Love" or "Friend" (i. 9, 15, ii. 2, 10, 13, iv. 1, 7, v. 2, vi. 4); "My Dove" (ii. 14, v. 2, vi. 9); "My Sister" (iv. 9, 10, v. 2); "Let me hear thy voice" (ii. 14, viii. 13); "Thou hast doves' eyes" (i. 15, iv. 1). Compare also iv. 1—3 with vi. 5—7, and iv. 4, 5 with vii. 3, 4.

A delicate observation of an ancient Hebrew doctor has been handed down in the 'Midrash Rabba,' viz. "that everything in the Song of Songs is said in praise of Israel," *i.e.* of the Bride; and that consequently those interpretations are to be rejected which introduce anything of blame, reproach, or ill intention, into what is addressed to her. The ob-

[1] Some (Harmer, Hitzig) spoil the integrity of the poem and its interpretation by assuming more than one object of the King's affection, many more (the advocates of the Shepherd-lover hypothesis) by insisting on there being two Lovers.

[2] Origen adds a fourth speaker, a Chorus of Young Men, companions of the Bridegroom. To this Chorus iii. 11 may be assigned.

servation is extended by Mercier to the tone and spirit of the whole composition[1]. The same remark was likewise made by the author of the 'Synopsis of Holy Scripture' once attributed to S. Athanasius: "Whereas in other Scriptures," he remarks, "are found words of indignation and wrath and terrible threatenings, this Book breathes of sweetness only, cheerfulness, and joy." The observation is a true and fruitful one, though ignored by many expositors, literal and allegorical. It might be urged, among other objections, to "the hypothesis" so called "of the Shepherd-lover," which, though favoured by a majority of modern interpreters, and worked out by some with great ingenuity, necessitates the introduction of many forced expositions and of thoughts and sentiments alien from the purity and sweetness of the whole composition. This hypothesis assumes that there are two Lovers in the Song, one a faithful simple-minded Shepherd, the other a magnificent voluptuous King, by each of whom the affections of a Shulamite maiden are alternately solicited, while she, faithful in her allegiance to her shepherd-lover, rejects with scorn the monarch's blandishments, and finally compels him to abandon his pursuit[2]. There is, we are persuaded, but one Lover in the Song, and one object of his affection, without rival or disturbing influence on either side. The Beloved of the Bride is in truth a King, and if she occasionally speaks of him as a Shepherd, she intimates herself (vi. 2, 3) that she is speaking figuratively. It is, moreover, quite in accordance with her character, as consistently delineated throughout the poem, that being herself a rustic maiden of at least comparatively lowly station she should, by such an appellation, seek to draw down him "whom her soul loveth" (i. 7, iii. 1, 2, 3, 4), though he be the King of Israel, within the narrower circle of thoughts and aspirations, in which she is herself accustomed to move. And, therefore, while the whole poem breathes of almost more than regal splendour and magnificence the Bride is nowhere represented as dwelling with any pride or satisfaction on the riches or grandeur of her Beloved, but only on what he is to her in his own person as "Chief among ten thousand and altogether desirable," thus exhibiting that characteristic of womanly affection which Cornelius à Lapide attributes to her in words erroneously ascribed by him to St Augustine: "Love heedless of dignity is devoid also of fear. The loving Soul, upborne by her aspirations and drawn by her desires, closes her eyes to Majesty but opens them to Delight[3]."

3. Date and Authorship.

Very various dates have been assigned to the Song by those who have denied its Salomonic authorship, ranging from the tenth to the second centuries before Christ. But most recent critics have agreed in assigning it an early date. So Ewald: "The Song, from many indications, must have been a literary product of the northern kingdom" [that of the ten tribes] "and published soon after the death of Solomon" ('Dichter des A. Bundes,' I. 47). His chief reasons for insisting on a date subsequent to the lifetime of Solomon, are drawn from his peculiar view of the purpose of the book, Ewald being an early and determined adherent of the hypothesis of the Shepherd-lover.

The *diction* of the Song (on the character of which several critics have insisted in arguing for a later date) is unquestionably peculiar. The poem is written in pure Hebrew of the best age, but with a large sprinkling of uncommon idioms and some very remarkable and apparently foreign words. Some of these may possibly have been provincialisms, and attributable, as Ewald assumes, to the writer's familiarity with the dialect of Northern Palestine. Diction apart, most of the references and allusions in the Song

[1] "Adde quod ex Hebræis diligenter est observandum hic omnia in laudem sonare non in dedecus, ac ne tantillum quidem ab alterutra parte dici, quod alteram possit offendere, sed omnia conciliationis et encomiorum et blanditiarum suavitatisque plena esse verba." Mercerus, 'Præf. in Expos. Cant. Cant.'

[2] Among its most distinguished advocates may be mentioned Ewald (1826), Umbreit (1828), Hitzig (1855), Ginsburg (1857), Bunsen (1860), Renan (1860) and Holtzmann (*Bunsen's Bibelwerk* VI. 1870).

[3] "Amor dignitatis nescius reverentiam nescit. Anima amans fertur votis, trahitur desideriis—majestati oculos claudit, aperit voluptati." 'Manuale,' cc. XIX. XX. S. Aug. 'Opp.' ed. Ben. Tom. VI. App.

would lead us to assign it, in accordance with its title, to the age of Solomon, nor does there seem to be sufficient reason for departing from the traditional belief that Solomon was himself the author; unless with Döpke we suppose it to have been a panegyric composed in his honour by a prophet or poet of the King's own circle. In that case some of the peculiarities of diction and phraseology might be accounted for by assuming the author to have been a native of the Northern part of Solomon's dominions.

One striking characteristic of the writer of the Song is a love of natural scenes and objects and familiarity with them as they would be presented, in the wide area of the Hebrew monarchy, to an observant eye in the age of Solomon, reminding us continually of him who 'spake of trees from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall, of beasts also and of fowl and of creeping things' (1 K. iv. 33). Thus for the North of Palestine, in which the writer seems to take particular delight, we have (iv. 8) the towering heights of Lebanon and Amana with the opposing peaks of Shenir and Hermon, the dens of lions there and haunts of leopards, the spreading cedars and stately cypresses (i. 17), the bright green flower-enamelled sward (i. 16) and gurgling streams (iv. 15), and the incense-laden breezes (iv. 11). Moving southward we encounter on the east of Jordan Gilead with its flocks (iv. 1, vi. 5), the heights of Bithron (ii. 17) and the district of Mahanaim (vi. 13), and towards the west Carmel with its cultivated fields (vii. 5), Sharon with its neighbouring valleys covered with their laughing crop of flowers (ii. 1, vii. 13), the troops of gazelles there feeding among lilies (iv. 5), milk-white doves sporting by the water side (v. 12) or hiding in the rocks (ii. 14), and the turtle-haunted groves (ii. 12). Finally in the furthest south the poet takes us to Engedi with its henna-plantations (i. 14), to Heshbon with its reservoirs (vii. 4), and to the palaces, gardens and well-placed towers of the royal city "beautiful for situation" (vi. 4, iv. 4, 6, 12—14); from whence we are hastened back once more to the simple pleasures of a country life, the vineyard, the orchard and the open field (vii. 11—13).

It has been observed that this short poem contains 18 names of plants and 13 of animals (Delitzsch).

And beside this delight in natural objects, not less is exhibited in the enumeration of those works of human art and labour and those articles of commerce, which in the time of Solomon so largely ministered to royal pomp and luxury: *e.g.* the tower of Lebanon that overlooked Damascus (vii. 4), and David's tower in Jerusalem with its hanging shields (iv. 4), rings and jewels (v. 14), crowns and necklaces (iii. 11, i. 10), palanquins and chariots (iii. 7, 9, i. 9), with their rich furniture, pillars of marble (v. 15), towers of ivory (vii. 4) and every kind of spice and costly perfume (iv. 6, 14, i. 12, 13).

The time in which the Song was written was unquestionably one of peace and general prosperity, such as occurred but very rarely in the chequered history of Israel. All the indications named above concur with this in fixing that time as the age of Solomon[1].

4. Methods of Interpretation, Literal and Allegorical.

The Song of Songs, like any other work of genius or Inspiration, cannot be properly interpreted, unless its fundamental thought be grasped at the outset, and continually kept in view. The following Commentary proceeds on the assumption that the primary subject and occasion of the poem was a real historical event, of which we have here the only record, the marriage-union of Solomon with a Shepherd-maiden of Northern Palestine, by whose beauty and nobility of soul the great King had been captivated. Starting from this historical basis, we assume further that the Song of Songs, as the work of one endued by Inspiration with that Wisdom "which overseeth all things" (Wisd. viii. 23), and so contemplates them from the highest point of view, is in its essential character an

[1] It seems right to mention here that Prof. Graetz of Breslau, the well-known Jewish historian, has arrived at results entirely different from these in his recent elaborate work, 'Schir Ha-Schirim' (Wien, 1871). He contends for a very late date, assigning the Song to the third century B.C. For a brief notice of some of his positions see Appendix.

ideal representation of human love in the relation of Marriage; that which is universal and common in its operation to all mankind being here set forth in one grand typical instance.

That such a purpose was actually in the writer's mind in inditing the Song seems indicated by himself at ch. viii. 6, 7, where he makes the Bride, addressing the Beloved, thus speak of the Bond which is henceforth to unite them:

"O set me as a signet on thine heart,
A signet on thine arm!
For strong as Death is Love,
Inflexible as Hell is Jealousy.
Her flames are flames of fire,
A lightning flash from the Eternal!
Waters many cannot quench this Love,
Nor water-streams o'erwhelm.
Though one should give his all away for love,
(*i.e.* seek to buy what is not freely given)
With scorn should he be scorned."

Of such love as this, pure, unbought, and changeless, we believe that the Song of Songs was, in the first instance, designed to give an idealized representation. To exhibit this, its original purpose, the exposition ought, therefore, in our opinion, to be strictly literal and historical, but not without due attention paid throughout to the ideal character of the poem, and its possible capacity for higher significances and applications. Nor may we at the same time dissemble our conviction that any allegorical method of exposition which declines attempting to elucidate an independent literal sense, on the plea that such endeavour would involve the interpretation in a succession of improprieties and contradictions, is itself to be rejected as baseless and untrue, and therefore dishonouring to a Sacred and Canonical Book.

The views thus given of the character and purpose of the Song of Songs are substantially identical with those set forth some twenty years ago by Prof. Delitzsch and the late Prof. Nägelsbach, who in vindicating the position of this Book in the Hebrew Canon regarded it as an inspired product of the "Wisdom" or Divine Philosophy of the Age of Solomon, having an ideal character in reference to the human history that formed its basis, and so also a symbolical or typical significance. To Prof. Delitzsch and his work on the Song[1], published in 1851, the writer of the present Commentary is under special obligation for early guidance into what seems to be the right path of interpretation, as well as for various helps by the way.

If, on the other hand, the allegorical method of interpretation is anyhow to be maintained, this can hardly be done on other principles than those laid down by Keil in his 'Einleitung z. A. Test.' (2 ed. 1859, pp. 370—376), who there contends, in opposition to the views of Delitzsch and Nägelsbach, that the Song was in its original purpose an ideal representation of the Communion of love between the Holy One and His Church as first exhibited in the Election of Israel, not following however (so he argues) any actual developments of that relation in the changing fortunes of the Chosen People, but representing (in accordance with the ideal truth of things) any transient disturbance of communion as resulting in the drawing of a closer bond; and that this is done by means of a succession of lyrico-dramatic Songs, and under the allegory of the bridal love of the Shulamite and Solomon. The whole conception is based, according to Keil, on the image referred to in Exod. xxxiv. 15 foll., and Lev. xxvi. 5 foll. (comp. Lev. xviii. 7; Num. xiv. 33; Deut. xxxii. 16, 31, and Exod. xx. 5). Nor is it (he maintains) to be wondered at that such a conception should suddenly spring up in the mind or age of Solomon into this full and vigorous life, when we consider the analogous development of the "Chokhmah" (or Hebrew Philosophy) in the same generation, and compare Pss. xlv. and lxxii. which equally belong to it.

These arguments, even if their soundness be admitted, seem hardly to dispense with the necessity, or militate against the truth, of the literal interpretation, which may stand on its own merits, if it bear the test of a critical comparison and

[1] 'Das Hohelied' (Leipzig, 8vo). In this early work Prof. Delitzsch did not enter so fully into the details of exposition as has been his wont in his more regular commentaries on other parts of Scripture; but, if slight in texture, it nevertheless occupies an important place in the history and development of the Exegesis of the Song.

sifting of details. The only question seems to be: is it possible to furnish such a literal and historical exposition of the whole poem as shall be self-consistent, and fairly represent in each detail the natural meaning of the words? We think it is, and what follows is offered as the scheme of an interpretation, which forms the basis of the expositions in our Commentary, and which they will endeavour to justify in detail.

5. Scheme of a Literal and Historical Interpretation.

The Song (as remarked already) consists of six parts (by some called acts) distinguished by changes of scene and subject, and by certain recurrent refrains.

Parts I.—III. constitute the first half or one main division of the Poem, which we entitle: THE BRIDE AND HER ESPOUSALS WITH THE KING (i. 2—v. 1). A Shulamite maiden, of surpassing grace and loveliness, is taken away from her rustic home by the King of Israel, and raised to the summit of felicity and honour by her marriage with him at Jerusalem. The three parts, which form this division, represent each a different scene and distinct action.

Part I. THE BRIDE IN THE KING'S CHAMBERS (i. 2—ii. 7), sub-divisible into four sections, corresponding to so many pauses in the action or dialogue: 1. "The Prologue" (i. 2—4); 2. "The Bride and the Daughters of Jerusalem" (i. 5—8); 3. "The entrance of the King" ((i. 9—14); 4. "The Bride and the Beloved" (i. 15—ii. 7).

The scene is laid apparently in a wooded district of Northern Palestine near the Bride's home, where the King, after the manner of Oriental Princes, is spending part of the summer season in tents. The magnificence of the Royal Pavilion is alluded to (i. 5), and it has been inferred from this, and other passages of Scripture, that Solomon had a special fondness for that part of his dominions. The three chief speakers of the Poem are now introduced in succession: first, A female chorus (called by the Bride "Daughters of Jerusalem") commence by singing a short ode of two stanzas in praise of the absent King, whose presence is expected and desired (i. 2—4). The next speaker, the Shulamite maiden (whom, for the sake of uniformity, we shall generally call "the Bride"), appears to have been recently brought from her country home to the King's Pavilion, to be there affianced to him. A brief dialogue ensues between her and the Chorus (i. 5—7). The King himself appears, in the third place, and commending the beauty of the Bride, receives from her in return words of praise and affection (i. 16—ii. 7). Throughout this part the Bride is represented as of inferior rank to him whom she calls her "Beloved," and appears to shrink at times from the splendours of the royal station that awaits her. She speaks of him both as a Shepherd and as a King; but, in either character, as of one in whose favour and society she finds supreme satisfaction and entire rest. It is a day of early love that is here described, but not that of their first meeting.

Part II. MONOLOGUES OF THE BRIDE (ii. 8—iii. 5), comprising two sections: 1. "The visit of the Beloved" (ii. 8—17); 2. "The Bride's first dream" (iii. 1—5).

This part carries us back to an earlier period than the former, and seems introduced for the sake of affording a glance at the previous history of the Shulamite in her relations to the King, and of rendering thereby the whole representation more complete. She describes to the Chorus in two monologues how the Beloved had visited her on a spring morning, and how she had afterwards dreamed of him at night. Both Parts (I. and II.) conclude with the Bride's Adjuration to the Chorus, "I charge you," &c.

Part III. ROYAL ESPOUSALS (iii. 6—v. 1), subdivisible into three sections: 1. "Bridal procession and royal entry" (iii. 6—11); 2. "The Bridegroom's commendation of the Bride" (iv. 1—7); 3. "The King's Invitation" (iv. 8—v. 1). This part commences with the refrain "Who is this," &c. and the scene changes to Jerusalem, whither the Bride is brought in royal state to be united to the King in marriage. The King in stately terms invites her to forsake her Northern home and become henceforth entirely his. The Bride replies in few words expressing her absolute obedience

and love. A welcome from the King to the Wedding-guests brings this third part and the former half of the Song to a close.

Parts IV.—VI. constitute the latter half of the poem, which might be entitled THE BRIDE THE KING'S WIFE (v. 2—viii. 14). In it we see the once lowly Shulamite, though now sharing with her Beloved the high places of Israel, yet retaining that sweetness, humility and devoted affection, which in other scenes and circumstances had gained his heart. She responds to the King's former invitation to exchange her rustic home for the splendours of Jerusalem (iv. 7, 8), by inviting him on her part to revisit with her those rural scenes, and share once more their simple pleasures (vii. 11—13): thus drawing down her Royal Friend to renewed sympathy with the lowly circle and estate from which his grace had raised her.

Part IV. SEEKING AND FINDING (v. 2—vi. 9) may be divided into three sections: 1. "The Bride's second dream." (v. 2—8); 2. "The Bride's commendation of the Beloved" (v. 9—vi. 3); 3. "The Beloved's commendation of the Bride" (vi. 4—9). The scene of this part is still Jerusalem. It opens with another monologue of the Bride relating to the chorus, a second dream concerning her Beloved. She then at their instance pours forth from a love-filled heart a stream of richest fancies in his praise, who, as she complains, has departed from her. The Chorus offering to aid her in her search of him, suddenly the Beloved reappears and gives in his turn the noblest commendations to the Bride.

Part V. HOMEWARD THOUGHTS (vi. 10—viii. 4), subdivisible into four sections: 1. "The Shulamite" (vi. 10—13); 2. "The dance of Mahanaim" (vii. 1—5); 3. "The King and the Bride" (vii. 6—10); 4. "The Bride's invitation" (vii. 11—viii. 4). This part, which begins with the refrain "Who is this," &c. and ends with the adjuration "I charge you," &c., presents in its details the greatest difficulties to the interpreter. But the general drift seems clear. The scene is still Jerusalem, or a Palace-garden in the neighbourhood; but the Bride's thoughts are now reverting to her northern home. She relates to the Chorus how in early spring she had first met the King in a walnut-garden in her own country; and they, addressing her by a name probably derived from her birthplace (vi. 13), ask her to perform for their entertainment a sacred dance seemingly well known to the Bride and her country-folk. The Bride complies, and while she is dancing and the Chorus are singing some stanzas in her praise, the King himself appears. In response to words of love and admiration from him, the Bride invites him to return with her into the country and to her mother's house.

Part VI. THE RETURN HOME (viii. 5—14), containing three very brief sections: 1. "Last vows sealed" (viii. 5—7); 2. "The Bride's intercession" (viii. 8—12); 3. "The Epilogue" (viii. 13, 14). This last part, which commences with the refrain "Who is this," &c., forms a fitting conclusion to the poem. The scene changes from Jerusalem or its neighbourhood to the Bride's birthplace. Thither she has now returned with the King, and there amid well-remembered scenes of earliest love their final vows are sealed. The Bride commends her brothers to the good graces of the King, and ends, at his request, by charming his ear with one last song, recalling to his memory a strain of other days. (See note on viii. 14.)

6. IDEAL AND TYPICAL CHARACTER.

If the historical interpretation thus given to the Song of Songs be recognized as true, it would not be difficult to shew that the history, which forms its groundwork, is throughout the poem contemplated from an ideal point of view, and that the fundamental idea expressed and illustrated is the awful all-constraining, the at once levelling and elevating power of the mightiest and most universal of human affections. Various refrains and phrases, striking as it were the key-note of the whole, give expression at regular intervals to this idea; *e.g.* (1) The Bride's thrice-recurring charge to the Chorus, gently warning them against thoughtlessly exciting so irrepressible a passion:

"I charge you daughters of Jerusalem!
[By the gazelles and by the hinds of the field]
That ye stir not up nor waken
Love until it please."
ii. 7, iii. 5, viii. 4.

Or (2) her somewhat similar adjuration lamenting the temporary loss of her Beloved One:

"I charge you daughters of Jerusalem
That if ye find my friend—
What tidings must ye bring him?
That sick for love am I." v. 8.

To which may be added (3) her innocent boast how her love to the King had suddenly upraised her to the high places of Israel:

"All unawares my loving soul had made me
The chariots of my people the renowned."

vi. 12. And (4) the King's exclamation a little further on:

"How fair, and what a charm hast thou,
O Love, amid delightsome things!" vii. 6.

Compare finally (5) the grand passage already quoted in which the Bride, sealing last vows of unalterable affection with the Beloved, refers the undying principle that unites them to its origin in the heart and being of God:

"Its flames are flames of fire
A lightning flash from Jah." viii. 6.

The ideal character of the whole poem is further evidenced by the way in which the chief points whereon the action turns are indicated: *e.g.* (1) the Bride's entry into Jerusalem before her marriage with the King and her subsequent return with him to her mother's house are both announced by the Chorus with the same admiring exclamation—

"Who then is this ascending from the pastures?" iii. 6, viii. 5.

While on another occasion, placed midway between these two, they are made to exclaim, with similar emphasis, on the appearance of the Bride,

"Who then is this with glances like the Dawn?
Fair as the silver Moon,
Bright as the noontide Fire,
Inspiring terror like the bannered Hosts!" vi. 10.

(2) In a somewhat similar way a chorus, probably of young men (Origen), indicates on one occasion the presence or approach of the King:

"Come forth and gaze, O Zion's daughters,
Upon the King, on Solomon in the crown
Wherewith his mother crowned him
Upon the day of his espousals
And on the day of gladness for his heart."
iii. 11. (Comp. vii. 5 and note.)

(3) It will be found moreover that the two halves, or main divisions of the Song have throughout numerous well-balanced contrasts and correspondences: in the one the Bride ascends to Jerusalem and at the King's invitation remains with him there, in the other at her request he returns with her to Shunem; in the one, the Beloved seeks and wins the Bride, in the other she seeks and obtains her will from him; in the one he claims her self-surrender, in the other she demands his vow of fidelity. In the First Half of the Song the Chorus sing the praise of the King, in the Second they celebrate the beauty of the Bride and her triumph over him[1]. Finally, in each of these main divisions the Bride relates to her companions a significant dream in order more fully to express her feelings towards the Beloved (iii. 1—5, v. 2—8), and in each she sings at his request a strain of peculiar import which seems to have a special music for his ear (ii. 17, and viii. 14).

These and other peculiarities, which impart to the Song of Songs its unique and enigmatical character, and have proved a *crux* to the soberest expositors, seem chiefly due to its idealizing treatment of an actual history felt at the time, and especially by the Writer, to be profoundly interesting and significant. And though little regarded by most of those who give the Song an historical interpretation, they may yet prove when viewed in their right connection a real assistance in unravelling its enigmas.

[1] We follow Delitzsch in regarding i. 2—4 as a Song of the Chorus in praise of the King, and vii. 1—5 as another Song of the same Chorus in praise of the Bride. The concluding stanza of the latter Song (vii. 5) thus indicates her triumph, through Love's charm, over her Royal Friend:

"Thy head above like Carmel shews,
Thy head of hair like purple glows,
A King within its locks enchained!"

Further, that the history thus idealized and the form in which it is presented have meanings beyond themselves and point to something higher, has ever been a deep-seated conviction in the mind both of the Church and of the Synagogue: nor need the extravagances of allegorical exposition impel the Christian interpreter now to reject it. In saying this, we hardly claim a deeper significance for the subject-matter of the Song of Songs than might be found in every true and noble human history when contemplated, as here, from the highest and most wide-reaching points of view.

The two axes, so to speak, on which the main action of the poem appears alternately to revolve, may be found in that two-fold invitation to which the reader's notice has been repeatedly called, the King's invitation to the Bride on bringing her to Jerusalem, the Bride's to the King in recalling him to Shunem[1]; in these two invitations and their immediate consequences—the willing obedience of the Bride and the ready condescension of the King, the first surrender on her part and the final vow on his—the writer of the Song seems to have intended to exhibit the two-fold energy, both for elevation and abasement, of that affection, to the delineation of which his work is dedicated, its easy reconcilement of the widest differences, and its ready absorption of all other claims. The omnipotent, transforming, and yet conserving power of faithful love is here seen in like yet diverse operation in the two personalities through whom it is exhibited. In the case of the Bride we see the lowly rejoicing in unforeseen elevation without loss of virginal simplicity, in that of the Beloved the highest is made happy through self-abasement without compromise of kingly honour:

"For ah! Love's might the widest gulf
can span
And links our meanest Earth to highest Heaven[2]."

And shall we then regard it as a mere fancy, which for so many ages past has been wont to find in the pictures and melodies of the Song of Songs types and echoes of the actings and emotions of the highest Love, of Love Divine, in its relations to Humanity; which, if dimly discerned through their aid by the Synagogue, have been amply revealed in the Gospel to the Church? Shall we not still claim to trace in the noble and gentle history thus presented foreshadowings of the infinite condescensions of Incarnate Love?—that Love which, first stooping in human form to visit us in our low estate in order to seek out and win its object (Ps. cxxxvi. 23), and then raising along with itself a sanctified Humanity to the Heavenly Places (Eph. ii. 6), is finally awaiting there an invitation from the mystic Bride to return to earth once more and seal the Union for Eternity (Rev. xxii. 17)? With such a conception of the character and purpose of the poem, we may at any rate sympathize with the glowing language of St Bernard concerning it: "This Song excels all other songs of the Old Testament. They being, for the most part, songs of deliverance from captivity. Solomon for such had no occasion. In the

[1] The King's invitation may be thus paraphrased:

"With me from Lebanon, O Bride,
With me from Lebanon thou must come.
Shalt wander forth from top of Amăna,
From summit of Shenir and Hermon,
From lions' dens,
From mountain-haunts of leopards." (iv. 8.)

The Bride's to the King:

"Come, my beloved, and hie we to the field,
Lodge there in villages,
Go early to the vineyards—see
If the vine blossom and its buds disclose,
Pomegranates be in flower,
There mine endearments will I give to thee!
The mandrakes yield their fragrance now,
And o'er our gates is every choicest fruit,
The new and old ones too, my Love!
Have I laid up for thee.
* * * *
I'll lead, I'll bring thee to my mother's house
And thou shalt teach me there;
I'll make thee drink of well-spiced wine
From juice of my pomegranate tree."
vii. 11—13, viii. 2.

The writer's attention was first directed to the significance of these Invitations by the Allegorical Commentaries of Theodoret (5th cent.) and Rashi (11th cent.). It has been strangely overlooked in later expositions both literal and allegorical.

[2] "Und ach! den grössten Abstand weiss die Liebe
Die Erde mit dem Himmel auszugleichen."
Goethe, 'Die nat. Königstochter.'

height of glory, singular in wisdom, abounding in riches, secure in peace, he here by Divine Inspiration sings the praises of Christ and His Church, the grace of holy love, the mysteries of the Eternal Marriage, yet all the while like Moses putting a veil before his face because at that time there were few or none that could gaze upon such glories"—or again—"This Song is not heard without; it is not sounded forth in public concourse; She only hears its notes who sings it, and He for whom it is sung—the Bridegroom and the Bride"—or when he asks further—"What is it but a nuptial Song expressing sweet and chaste endearments of two minds, their agreement in manners, and their consenting charity of affections one towards another?"

7. PLAN OF THE FOLLOWING COMMENTARY.

A few words remain to be said on one or two points specially kept in view in the following notes:

1. Our main object has been to elucidate what we believe to be the genuine grammatical and historical sense of the whole composition. The often widely discrepant interpretations of those who advocate the hypothesis of a Shepherd-lover opposed to Solomon have not been lost sight of, though the allotted space did not permit any attempt at refuting them in detail. That theory has been so generally adopted by modern interpreters, and expositions based upon it have been so favourably received by the chief representatives of modern criticism, that to impugn or disregard it now might seem to savour of undue presumption. We would therefore in the first place frankly recognize the great, though unequal merit of such commentaries and expositions as those of Ewald and Umbreit, Meier and Hitzig, Bunsen and Holtzmann, Renan and Réville, Ginsburg and Haughton, and thankfully acknowledge our obligations to them. But we must at the same time venture to say of the theory itself (which with various shades of interpretation these and a crowd of modern critics are agreed in maintaining), that the more we examine it in detail, the more thoroughly unsound it appears to be in its main positions. The readiest way to its refutation might perhaps be found in a careful critical discussion and comparison of the numerous and often mutually destructive forms which this one hypothesis has been made to assume in the hands of even its most able advocates.

2. Unique as unquestionably is the position of the Song of Songs in the Hebrew Canon, there are yet numerous and interesting points of contact, both in thought and diction, between this and other parts of Scripture, especially the Sapiential and Prophetical Books of the Old Testament. Particular attention has been directed to these points; and it is hoped that, of the more important of such parallels, very few have been left unnoticed.

3. Finally, some attention has been paid to ancient allegorical interpretations, and to a few others conceived in their spirit. No one can read the best ancient or medieval Jewish and Christian expositions of this Book without perceiving how largely the Song of Songs has ministered to devout thought and profitable meditation in many minds, to the sustenance of elevating hopes of "good times coming" in seasons of despondency, and in general to the maintenance of the spiritual life in the dry tree of unconverted Israel or amid the corruptions of medieval Christianity. We have therefore thought it not unsuitable to the general purpose of the present Commentary to notice under each section, and so far as our limited space would allow, some of those allegorical interpretations which for various reasons seemed most interesting. Particular regard has been given throughout to the historico-prophetic expositions of the 'Chaldee Targum,' a work, notwithstanding its many puerilities, of rare merit for its age and authorship, being probably the composition of a persecuted Israelite in the seventh century. But, to whatever age its composition be referred, it will never cease to be of considerable value, both for the expositor of Scripture and the intelligent student of historical theology.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The church's love unto Christ.* 5 *She confesseth her deformity,* 7 *and prayeth to be directed to his flock.* 8 *Christ directeth her to the shepherds' tents:* 9 *and shewing his love to her,* 11 *giveth her gracious promises.* 12 *The church and Christ congratulate one another.*

THE song of songs, which *is* Solomon's.

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: [a]for [†]thy love *is* better than wine.

3 Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

4 [b]Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into

[a] chap. 4. 10.
† Heb. *thy loves*
[b] John 6. 44.

CHAP. I. 1. Hebrew title of the book, indicating its character and authorship. It is "the Song of songs," *i.e.* (according to a well-known idiomatic periphrasis for the superlative) the best or most excellent of songs, the song *par excellence*, well rendered by Luther, *Das Hohelied*, "the High Song."

which is Solomon's] Literally, "to" or "for Solomon," *i.e.* belonging to Solomon as its author or concerning him as its subject. For the latter interpretation, compare Ps. xlv. 1, and note. But in a title or inscription, the former is to be preferred. So in many titles of Psalms the same Hebrew particle occurs as sign of authorship.

FIRST PART.

THE BRIDE IN THE KING'S CHAMBERS. CHAP. I. 2—II. 7.

2—4. THE PROLOGUE.—The Song commences with two stanzas recited in praise of the King (now absent) by a chorus of virgins belonging to the royal household (henceforth companions and attendants of the Bride; comp. Ps. xlv. 14, 15, and Esth. ii. 9), to whose sentiments of admiration and love they give expression before she speaks herself. The alternate use of singular and plural ("me," "we," "the virgins") shews that we have here the song of a chorus, not of the Bride speaking in her own person. Each stanza ends with the refrain, "they love thee." Expositors, Jewish and Christian, interpret the whole as spoken by the Church of the Heavenly Bridegroom.

2. *Let him kiss me*] Christian expositors, from Origen downwards, have regarded this as a prayer of the Church under the old covenant for closer communion with the Godhead through the Incarnation; "How long shall He send me kisses by Moses and the prophets? I desire the touch of His own lips." (Origen.) Jewish interpreters make it a prayer of Israel in reference to the first giving of the law on Sinai: "God spake to us face to face as a man kisseth his friend for the greatness of his love." ('Chaldee Targum,' 7th cent., and the still older 'Midrash Rabba.') St Gregory ('Moral. in Job,' XIV. 43) unites in effect both interpretations: "Every precept of Christ received by the Church is as one of His kisses."

for thy love is] Better (as margin), **thy loves are**, *i.e.* thy endearments or tokens of affection are more desired than thine entertainment or any other delights.

3. *Because of the savour*] Better, taken as an independent clause: **For fragance are thine unguents good**, making with the clause that follows two steps of a climax "Thy perfumes are good, Thy name the best of all perfumes." "Ointments" here are unguents or fragrant oils largely used for anointing at entertainments. Comp. Pss. xxiii. 5, xlv. 7, 8; Prov. xxvii. 9; St Luke vii. 46; St John xii. 3.

thy name—poured forth] As unguents are the sweeter for diffusion, so the King's name the wider it is known. Compare, for the thought, Hos. xiv. 7 (margin); Isai. xxvi. 8; and, especially, for a similar paronomasia, Eccles. vii. 1, "Name" (Heb. *Shēm*) "is a goodlier thing than good oil" (Heb. *Shémen*).

4. *Draw me, we will run*] Allegorical interpreters compare Hos. xi. 4; Jer. ii. 2; Hos. xi. 10, 11.

the king hath brought me] Made me a

his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: [1] the upright love thee.

[1] Or, *they love thee uprightly*.

5 I *am* black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

6 Look not upon me, because I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not kept.

7 Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy flock* to rest at noon: for why should I be [1] as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

[1] Or, *as one that is veiled*.

8 ¶ If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way

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member of his household. This is true of every member of the Chorus as well as of the Bride.

the upright love thee] Following the Vulgate, *recti diligunt te:* better, **uprightly** (marg.) **do they** (*i.e.* "the virgins" of *v.* 3) **love thee.** Compare Ps. lviii. 1; Song vii. 9; Prov. xxiii. 31, where the Hebrew word is the same.

5—8. *The Bride and the Daughters of Jerusalem.*

A rustic maiden, lately brought into the King's chambers, makes excuse to the Chorus for her rude appearance and dark complexion, while innocently acknowledging the beauty which commends her to the King. This section is made by the Targumist and other Jewish interpreters to adumbrate the condition of Israel in the wilderness; by Origen, and other Christian expositors after him, that of the Gentile Church on her first conversion.

5. *I am black*] **Swart**, or dark-hued, as the tents of Kedar with their black goats' hair coverings, rough and weather-stained, "but comely" (beautiful) as the rich hangings which adorn the pavilion of Solomon.

Kedar] (Name of an Arab tribe, Gen. xxv. 13; Ps. cxx. 5.) The word itself signifies "dark" or "black." Possibly "tents of Kedar" stands here poetically for shepherds' tents in general (Isai. lx. 7): at 2 S. vii. 2, "curtains" is used as synonymous with "tent" or "tabernacle."

6. *Look not upon me*] In wonder or scorn at my **swarthy** hue. It was acquired in enforced but honest toil: **the sun hath scanned me** (or "glared upon me") with his burning eye. She uses here a different word from that rendered "look" above, a word twice found in Job (xx. 9, xxviii. 7), and indicating in the latter place the piercing glance of a bird of prey.

my mother's children] Or, **sons**; a more affectionate designation than "brothers," and implying the most intimate relationship. Children of the same mother are wont (in the polygamic East even more than with us) to be specially attached to one another. Comp. Deut. xiii. 6; Pss. l. 20, lxix. 8; Gen. xxxiv. 25, and 2 S. xiii.

were angry with me] Comparing viii. 12, and note there, we may conjecture that this anger was but a form of jealous care for their sister's safety. They sought by engaging her in rustic labours to preserve her from idleness and temptation, albeit with a temporary loss of outward comeliness.

mine own vineyard] Literally, **my vineyard which is mine**, as at viii. 12, figurative expression for herself or her beauty. These, her first words, exhibit the Bride's candour and simplicity. She next addresses the still absent Beloved One.

7. *Tell me*] She seems to dread a public reception by the King, and would fain meet him alone.

whom my soul loveth] A phrase recurring several times in ch. iii. 1—5. It expresses great intensity of affection. "Thou whom my soul loveth, so I call thee; for the whole universe of rational creatures were unable to express thy name." (Gregory of Nyssa.)

where thou feedest] "Ubi pascas" (Vulg.), *i.e.* tell me where thou pursuest thy occupation as a shepherd: so she speaks figuratively of the Son of David (comp. ii. 16 and vi. 3), as David called the Holy One of Israel "my Shepherd," Ps. xxiii. 1.

makest thy flock to rest] Or, **lie down;** a term properly used of the couching of four-footed animals: "thy flock" is here therefore easily understood (Ezek. xxxiv. 14, 15). Comp. Ps. xxiii. 2, and Jer. l. 6, "My people have forgotten their resting-place," literally, "their place for lying down."

as one that turneth aside] Or, **goeth astray** like an outcast: a better rendering than the "is veiled" of the margin. (See Note below.)

8. *fairest among women*] Epithet elsewhere applied to the Bride by the Chorus (v. 9, vi. 1). They therefore, and not the King, are the speakers here. Taking up her figurative style (and apparently with a slight irony), they bid her seek the Beloved by following the tracks of the sheep in the direction of a pastoral encampment, which forms (we may conjec-

forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

9 I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

10 Thy cheeks are comely with rows *of jewels*, thy neck with chains *of gold*.

11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

12 ¶ While the king *sitteth* at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

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ture) a part of the landscape. Their meaning seems to be: If thy Beloved be indeed a shepherd, as thou callest him, then seek him yonder among other shepherds, but if a King, thou wilt find him here in his royal dwelling. Thus invoked, the Beloved appears and addresses the Bride.

9—14. *Entrance of the King.*

This section consists of two stanzas of equal length (*vv.* 9—11 and 12—14). It is regarded (as well as that which follows, i. 15—ii. 7) by the ancient commentators (both Jewish and Christian) as expressing "the love of espousals" (Jer. ii. 2) between the Holy One and His Church, first in the wilderness of the Exodus, and then in the wilderness of the world (Ezek. xx. 35, 36).

9. *To a company of horses*] Or, **to a mare of mine in the chariots of Pharaoh I liken thee, O my friend.** (The last word is the feminine form of that rendered "friend" at *v.* 16.) The comparison of the Bride to a beautiful horse is singularly like one in Theocritus, 'Id.' XXIII. 31 (as 'Id.' X. 26—29 resembles *v.* 5 here). Some have conjectured that the Greek poet, having read the Septuagint Version of the Song at Alexandria, may have borrowed these thoughts from it. If so, we have here the first instance of an influence of sacred on profane literature. At Zech. x. 4, Judah is called the Lord's "war-horse." The simile is peculiarly appropriate on the lips, or from the pen, of Solomon, who first brought horses and chariots from Egypt (1 K. x. 28, 29). As applied to the Bride it expresses, like that at vi. 4 and 10, the stately and imposing character of her beauty. From what follows (*vv.* 10, 11), it would seem that the trappings and adornments of the noble animal form part of the comparison. Comp. Job xxxix. 19—25.

10. 11. *rows ... borders*] Heb. *thorim* (in both places), ornaments forming part of the Bride's head-dress, probably strings of beads or other ornaments descending on the cheeks. Elaborate decorations of this kind are still in vogue among the female inhabitants of the Lebanon (see Lady Strangford's 'Egyptian Sepulchres and Syrian Shrines,' Vol. I. p. 186, and compare Olearius' description of a Persian head-dress, quoted by Harmer, 'Outlines,' p. 205). The "chains" = "things strung or linked together" are evidently **a necklace.** The introduction of "jewels" and "gold" by our translators in *v.* 10 injures the sense and destroys the climax of *v.* 11, which (after Origen and Bp. Patrick) we may regard as spoken by a chorus (hence "we," not "I," as when the King speaks, *v.* 9). They promise the Bride ornaments more worthy and becoming than the rustic attire in which she has already such charms for the King: "Thorim of gold will we make for thee with studs (or 'points') of silver." Comp. Ezek. xvi. 11, 13: "I decked thee with ornaments... I put a chain upon thy neck...thou wast decked with gold and silver." The "studs," or "points," are little silver ornaments which it is proposed to affix to the new golden "thorim" (comp. Prov. xxv. 11), or substitute for the strung beads of the Bride's necklace. This concludes the first stanza, the second is the Bride's reply.

12. *While the king*] The context leaves the meaning of this sentence somewhat ambiguous. It might be rendered, first, as referring to the past: While the King was in his circle (*i.e.* during his absence from me at the banquet or on the divan), "my spikenard gave forth its fragrance" (to attract him); or, secondly, in the present tense: "While the King is in his circle my spikenard giveth forth," &c. In this case Origen's interpretation might be adopted, viz. that the Bride represents herself as anointing the King, like Mary (John xii. 3), with her most precious unguent. In that case her meaning would be: While the King reclines at the banquet I anoint him with my costliest perfume, but he has for me a yet sweeter fragrance (*vv.* 13, 14). Comp. *v.* 3, and note.

at his table] **in his circle.** The Hebrew word signifies properly a circular arrangement of couches on which guests sit or recline. Comp. 1 S. xvi. 11: "We will not sit down (lit. sit round or form the circle) till he come hither."

my spikenard] An unguent of great esteem in the ancient world, retaining its Indian name in Hebrew, Greek and Latin (nĕrd, νάρδος, nardus). It is obtained from an Indian plant now called *jatamansi* ('Dict. of the Bible,' art. *Spikenard*). It recurs further on as one of the plants in the garden of the Bride (iv. 14).

13 A bundle of myrrh *is* my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

14 My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of [1] camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.

15 [c] Behold, thou *art* fair, [1] my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes.

16 Behold, thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed *is* green.

17 The beams of our house *are* cedar, *and* our [1] rafters of fir.

[1] Or, *cypress.*
[c] chap. 4. 1. & 5. 12.
[1] Or, *my companion.*
[1] Or, *galleries*

13, 14. *A bundle of myrrh*] What the fragrance of my spikenard is to the King, that in return he is to me, sweet and fragrant as a bag of myrrh-drops or cluster of henna flowers. The 13th verse might be rendered: **A bag of myrrh is my beloved to me, which lodgeth in my bosom.** The Hebrew word (*lun* or *lin*) does not necessarily mean "to spend the night," but often simply to lodge or dwell. So, Job xxxix. 9, it is rendered "abide," and Isai. i. 21 "lodgeth."

a cluster of camphire] Marg. "cypress," probably a mere mis-spelling for "cyprus," the name by which the plant called *henna* by the Arabs (*Lawsonia alba*) was known to the Greeks and Romans. It is still much esteemed throughout the East for the fragrance of its flowers and the dye extracted from its leaves. The Hebrew name of the plant is *copher*, from which probably "cyprus" is derived. The rendering "camphire" (camphor) is undoubtedly wrong (Rev. W. Houghton in 'Dict. of the Bible,' App. A., art. *Camphire*). "Copher" is named again (iv. 13) as one of the spices in the garden of the Bride.

vineyards of En-gedi] The tropical climate of Engedi (see Robinson's description, 'Biblical Researches in Palest.' II. pp. 303—316) would make it suitable for the cultivation of henna. The word rendered "vineyards" (Kerem) is used for other enclosures than actual vineyards, *e.g.* Judg. xv. 5, where it stands for olive-yard. Engedi was, however, famous for its vines, and the henna may have been cultivated with the vines in the same inclosures.

15.—II. 7. *The Beloved and the Bride.*

A dialogue ensues between the King and the Bride, commencing with six responsive couplets, in which each in succession developes the thought or returns the commendations of the other (i. 15—ii. 3). It is noteworthy, that almost every term of praise and endearment here employed may be exactly paralleled by those elsewhere made use of in Scripture to describe the relations of Israel or the Church to the Heavenly Bridegroom.

15. *Behold, thou art fair, my love*] The King speaks: **Lo, thou art beautiful** (the same word as in Ezek. xvi. 13, 14, 15, 25), **my friend** (see *v.* 9, note, and ii. 7, note). Comp. Ps. xlv. 11, "So shall the King desire thy beauty." Outward beauty is of course the first here thought of, not inaptly styled by Tertullian, "a corporeal felicity, a certain agreeable clothing of the soul not to be cavilled at" ('De Cultu Fem.' II. 2); but in the Bride of the Song this outward fairness is symbol and accompaniment of an inward beauty indicated in the following: **thine eyes are doves**, *i.e.* innocent, meek, and loving (Hengstenberg). The meaning *may* be, "thine eyes are" like those of "doves." (Compare *feet like hinds'* (feet), 2 S. xxii. 34; Ps. xviii. 33; Hab. iii. 19.) But such an ellipsis need hardly be assumed here. See v. 12, and note. The Bride is herself called "a dove." ii. 14 and vi. 9, as is the Church of Israel, Ps. lxxiv. 22: comp. Ps. lxviii. 13.

16. *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved*] The Bride replies: **Lo, thou art beautiful, my Beloved**; comp. Isai. v. 1. "song of my beloved," and xxxiii. 17, "thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty;" both, perhaps, conscious references to this Song, Isaiah being the only prophet who thus speaks of the Holy One of Israel as *dôdi* ("my kinsman," Septuagint, "my beloved," Vulgate), the term constantly employed by the Bride throughout the Song to designate him "whom her soul loveth."

yea, pleasant] More than corporeally beautiful, full of moral grace and charm: comp. 2 S. i. 23. So Pss xxvii. 4 and xc. 17 speak of **the pleasantness** (not "beauty) of the Lord, using the same word. Comp. Pss. xvi. 11 and cxxxv. 3. "Christ is beautiful," says Ven. Bede, "in His Divinity, pleasant in His Humanity;" "beautiful in His own nature," says St Bernard, "pleasant as manifested to us in grace."

our bed is green] Or, "flourishing" (Vulg. *floridus*). The epithet is appropriate for a bank or natural bed of grass and flowers,

> "Pansies and violets and asphodel
> And hyacinth, Earth's freshest softest lap,"

on which we may imagine the Bride to be seated with the King, but not for an article of furniture, an ordinary couch or bed. The word occurs Hos. xiv. 8; Jer. xi. 16, xvii. 8; Pss. lii. 8, xcii. 14; Dan. iv. 4. In the last two instances it is rendered in our Version "flourishing," and so might be with equal fitness in all the others. It means, properly, "full of sap, freshness and vigour."

17. *The beams of our house*] The King re-

plies, in reference to the last words of the Bride, **The beams of our houses here are cedars; our galleries are cypresses,** *i.e.* the tall umbrageous forest-trees shut us in, as we sit together on this grassy bed, like the roof and walls of a many-chambered house, while cypress avenues on every side seem like the long-drawn corridors of a stately palace. The words are often assigned to the Bride from not observing this sense and the amœbæan or antiphonal character of the whole passage. The "fir," better **cypress** (Sept. and Vulg.), **pine** or **juniper**, *i.e.* the *Juniperus excelsa* ('Dict. of the Bible,' art. *Fir*), is often named in Scripture along with the cedar as "the glory of Lebanon." See 1 K. v. 10, 2 K. xix. 23; Zech. xi. 2.

NOTE on CHAP. I 7.

Comp. Isai. xxii. 17, 18, where the context requires a similar rendering of ועטך עטה, not as in A.V.: "will surely cover thee," but "shall hurl thee hence," or make thee an outcast.

CHAPTER II.

1 The mutual love of Christ and his church. 8 The hope, 10 and calling of the church. 14 Christ's care of the church. 16 The profession of the church, her faith and hope.

I *AM* the rose of Sharon, *and* the lily of the valleys.

2 As the lily among thorns, so *is* my love among the daughters.

3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so *is* my beloved among the sons. † I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my † taste.

† Heb. *I delighted and sat down, &c.*
† Heb. *palate.*

CHAP. II. 1. *I am the rose of Sharon*] Taking up the King's thought, the Bride replies, "And I am like a lovely wild flower springing at the root of the stately forest-trees." This obvious meaning and occasion of her words is obscured by the unfortunate division of the chapters (chap. ii. ought to have begun at i. 15, or chap. i. to have been continued to ii. 7). The majority of Christian fathers, before the development of the *cultus* of the Virgin, assigned this verse to the King (Christ). (See Cornelius à Lapide and Ghislerius *in loc.*) Hebrew commentators generally assign it to the Bride. It is quite uncertain what flower is meant by the Hebrew *chabatsseleth*, rendered (here and Isai. xxxv. 1) "rose." The etymology is in favour of its being a plant with bulbous root. The Targum has *Narcissus.* The Vulgate rendering is *flos campi* ("flower of the field," Coverdale). "Sharon" might be translated "plain" or "field;" but elsewhere (with possibly one exception, 1 Chro. v. 16) it is used as the proper name of the celebrated plain extending from Joppa to Cæsarea, between the hill-country and the sea (Isai. xxxiii. 9; Acts ix. 35). Chateaubriand and other travellers have remarked the abundance of flowers with which this plain is still carpeted in spring. Eusebius and Jerome record the existence of another, smaller plain of Sharon (Saron), so called down to their time, and situated between Mount Tabor and the sea of Tiberias ('Onomastica Sacra,' ed. de Lagarde, pp. 154, 296). This "Sharon" would be very near the Bride's native home if that were Shunem.

lily of the valleys] The lily is the favourite flower of the Song, and is mentioned seven times.

2. *As the lily*] The King resumes, taking up the Bride's comparison: "As the lily excels in beauty the thorny shrubs among which it grows, so my friend excels her companions." The thought introduced by many allegorical interpreters, that these thorns are regarded as enemies to the gentle flower that rises among them, appears not to have been present to the mind of the sacred writer. Thorny shrubs and plants abound in Palestine, and the Hebrew of Scripture is very rich in terms to designate them. Israel is compared to the lily, Hos. xiv. 5.

3. *As the apple tree*] The Bride's answer closing the gentle strife: "As the 'tappuach' with its fragrant fruit excels the barren trees of the wild wood, so my Beloved his associates and friends." The "tappuach," rendered in our version "apple," or "apple-tree," is mentioned four times in the Song, and again at Proverbs xxv. 11 and Joel i. 12. The Targum identifies it here with the ethrôg or citron, of which Virgil gives the noble description in the second Georgic (126—135), praising its fragrance, the tenacity and density of its foliage, and the reviving healing power of its fruit; which last could not however have been literally "sweet to the taste" (tristes succos, Virg.). "Tappuach" may in early Hebrew have been a generic name for apple, quince, citron, orange, &c., as the same term in Arabic is said to be still (Gesenius, 'The-

† Heb. *house of wine.*

4 He brought me to the † banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love.

† Heb. *straw me with apples.*

5 Stay me with flagons, † comfort me with apples: for I *am* sick of love.

a chap. 8. 3.

6 a His left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

† Heb. *I adjure you.*
b chap. 3. 5. & 8. 4.

7 † b I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

8 ¶ The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

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saurus,' p. 896). The Bride continues speaking to the end of *v.* 7. (From 3b, "I sat down," to end of *v.* 5, she enlarges the thought of 3a.)

4. *his banner*] Or, "standard." Comp. Num. i. 52, x. 14, 18, 22, 25, where the same word is used of the great military ensigns which preceded the tribes on their march through the wilderness. The standard is the rallying-point and guide of the individual soldier, giving to each encouragement and confidence in the weariness of the march, or the extremity of conflict (Hengstenberg). So the Bride, transplanted from a lowly station to new scenes of unwonted splendour, finds support and safety in the known attachment of her Beloved. His "love" is her "banner." The thought is similar to that expressed in Moses' altar-name, "Jehovah-nissi" (Exod. xvii. 15, and note). The Vulgate rendering, founded on a different conception of the meaning of the Hebrew, "Ordinavit in me charitatem," has led some Christian expositors to trains of useful thought, on the necessity of "order," in the development and exhibition of Christian charity (Cornelius à Lapide *in loc.*).

"Set love in order thou that lovest me,
Never was virtue out of order found."
Fragment of St Francis of Assisi.
Rossetti's 'Early Ital. Poets,' p. 17.

5. *flagons*] More probably **cakes of raisins** or dried grapes (2 S. vi. 19; 1 Chro. xvi. 3; Hos. iii. 1). For an instance of the reviving power of dried fruit, see 1 S. xxx. 12.

6. *His left hand*] This sentence is exactly repeated at viii. 3. It is there rendered as a wish or prayer, and so it ought to be here: "O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand did embrace me!" Let him draw me to him with entire affection. Comp. Deut. xxxiii. 27; Prov. iv. 8.

7. *I charge you*] The Bride concludes with an adjuration to the Chorus, which has been variously interpreted. It should be rendered: **I adjure you......by the gazelles, or by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up nor awaken love until it please.** Our version, **my love**, is misleading. The affection or passion in itself, not its object, is here meant. The Bride is still speaking, not the Beloved, nor the sacred writer in his own person (as some have assumed, against the dramatic character consistently maintained throughout the Song). This adjuration, three times significantly introduced as a concluding formula (ii. 7, iii. 5, viii. 4), forms, so to speak, one of the axes on which the whole composition turns. It expresses one of the main thoughts of the poem; namely, that genuine love is a shy and gentle affection which dreads intrusion and scrutiny (hence the allusion to the gazelles and hinds, shy and timid creatures), but dangerous in its strength and vehemence if heedlessly awakened. (See Note at end of the Chapter.)

The complementary thought is that of viii. 6, 7, where love is again described, and by the Bride, as a fiery principle, a lightning-flash from the Eternal One, "strong as death," and tenacious as the grave in jealous hold of the object of possession.

SECOND PART. THE BRIDE'S TWO MONOLOGUES.

Chap. II. 8—III. 5.

II. 8—17. *The visit of the Beloved.*

The Bride relates to the Chorus a visit which the Beloved had paid her some time previously in her native home, situated in a garden or vineyard (like those described by modern travellers in the Lebanon), perched among rocks, and only to be reached by climbing a precipitous path (*v.* 14) leading up from the plain or valley. Here the Beloved finds her on a fair spring morning, and solicits her company. The Bride, immersed in rustic toils, refuses for the present, but confessing her love, and her delight in his companionship, bids him return at the cool of day and spreading out of evening shadows. It is a spring-time of affection which is here described, still earlier than that of the former chapter, a day of pure first-love, in which, on either side, all royal state and circumstance is forgotten or concealed. The most ancient allegorical interpreters evidently felt this. Hence, perhaps, the annual recitation of the Song of Songs by the synagogue with each return of spring, at the Feast of Passover, and special interpretations of this pas-

c ver. 17.

9 [c] My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, † shewing himself through the lattice.

† Heb. *flourishing.*

10 My beloved spake, and said un-

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sage, by Hebrew doctors, as referring to the paschal call of Israel out of Egypt, and, by Christian fathers, as foreshadowing the evangelic mysteries of Easter—Resurrection and Regeneration. Finally, the whole scene has been thought to represent the communion of a newly-awakened soul with Christ, He gradually revealing Himself to her, and bidding her come forth into fuller communion (Bossuet).

8. *The voice of my beloved!*] Better, **sound.** Not a voice, but the sound of approaching footsteps is meant. (Comp. Isai. xiii. 4, where the same word is rightly rendered "noise.") The Beloved does not speak till *v.* 10. The mountains, or hills over which he bounds, are mentioned again at ii. 17 and viii. 14, as if they were his favourite haunts. So the Bride elsewhere speaks of herself as hieing to the hill of myrrh and frankincense (iv. 6, note).

9. *like a roe*] **gazelle.** The Hebrew word is *tsebi*, and signifies "beauty" or "ornament." In its Aramaic form Tabitha it became a proper name Dorcas, Acts ix. 36. The points of comparison here are beauty of form, grace and speed of movement. See 2 S. ii. 18, and 1 Chro. xii. 8, where princes are compared to "gazelles on the mountains." These, and such passages as Gen. xlix. 21; Ps. xviii. 33, and Hab. iii. 19, prove that the simile in Scripture is one altogether dignified and royal, and cannot therefore be taken here to imply, as some imagine, that the Beloved is a shepherd of lowly station.

standeth behind our wall] Heb. "*kothel*," the clay-built wall of the house or vineyard of the Bride's family, different from the "*chômah*" (v. 7, viii. 9, 10), or strong wall of a city or fortress.

looketh forth at the windows] **in, through** (lit. **from**) **the windows—through the lattice.** Our translators, misled probably by the ordinary allegorical interpretations which make the windows here to be those of heaven, seem to have thought of the Beloved as "looking out of window" (for which a different particle is used, Gen. xxvi. 8; Judg. v. 28, &c.), being himself within the house. So Mercier. comparing Isai. lxiii. 15. But the meaning evidently is, that he is looking in at, or through, the window from the outside. Comp. note on v. 4.

shewing himself] Elsewhere the word is rendered "blossom," or "flourish" (Isai. xxvii. 6; Pss. ciii. 15, cxxxii. 18); hence the marginal rendering here, "flourishing." Some expositors imagine that the radiant face of the Beloved is thus compared to some beautiful flower entangled in the lattice-work which protects the opening of the window, whence he gazes down upon the Bride (Hengstenberg, Bp. Wordsworth). But the Talmudic use of the word = "to glance, look eagerly with sparkling eyes" (Fürst, *sub. voce*), gives a better sense, favoured by parallelism and context, as well as etymology. The two clauses might be rendered, **gazing through the window, peering through the lattice.**

10. *My beloved spake, and said unto me*] **began and said.** Some find a difficulty in this clause, as being inconsistent with the dramatic character of the poem elsewhere carefully maintained, and have even regarded it as an interpolation, without any MS. authority. The right interpretation of the whole passage, ii. 8—17, as a monologue of the Bride narrating a past event, disposes of this difficulty. Reporting the invitation addressed to her by the Beloved, she is obliged to indicate that she is giving his very words.

Rise up] **Arise, my friend, my beautiful one, and come away.** A stanza of 8 lines (*vv.* 10[b]—13) begins and ends with this refrain, in which the Beloved invites the Bride to come forth with him into the open champaign, now a scene of verdure and beauty, and at a time of mirth and mutual affection. The season indicated is that of spring after the cessation of the latter rain in the first or paschal month (Joel ii. 23), *i.e.* Nisan or Abib, corresponding to the latter part of March and early part of April. Six signs of the season are given.

(1) "The winter and its **heavy rain** is over" (*v.* 11). For the six summer months rain rarely falls in Palestine.

(2) "Buds and flowers appear on the earth." Comp. "the tender grass out of the earth after rain" of 2 S. xxiii. 4.

(3) "The time of song is come," *i.e* the song of pairing birds; so many Rabbinical commentators of the middle ages interpret it (Rashi, Ibn Ezra, &c.), but the ancient versions are unanimous for the rendering *tempus putationis*, "the pruning time is come." The parallelism with the following clause makes the correctness of the former interpretation almost certain. Comp. Isai. xxiv. 16.

(4) "The voice of the turtle-dove is heard" (*v.* 12). The turtle is a bird of passage in Palestine. Comp. Jer. viii. 7.

(5) "The fig-tree **spiceth** (Gen. l. 2, 26 "embalm") her **young figs**" (Heb.

to me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

11 For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone;

12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing *of birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;

13 The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

14 ¶ O my dove, *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is* comely.

15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines *have* tender grapes.

16 ¶ [d] My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: he feedeth among the lilies.

17 [e] Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou [f] like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains [1] of Bether.

[d] chap. 6. 3. & 7. 10.
[e] chap. 4. 6.
[f] chap. 8. 14.
[1] Or, *of division.*

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paggim), "grossuli," figs in their crude hard state. Figs in the Holy Land ripen about the end of June.

(6) **The vines in blossom give forth fragrance** (*v.* 13). The fragrance of the vine-blossom ("semadar"), which precedes the appearance of "the tender grape," is very sweet but transient. That such is the case "needs no proofs or citations for the inhabitants of a wine-country." (Meier.)

"This description of spring," says Mercier, "has not perhaps its equal in any of our poets (Greek or Latin)." Cyril of Jerusalem felt its beauty. Interpreting *vv.* 11, 12 of our Lord's resurrection in the spring, he says ('Cat.' XIV. 10), "This season is with the Hebrews the first month, in which the feast of Pasch (Easter) is celebrated, formerly the typical but now the true. At this time of year the world was created, and man cast out of paradise. Salvation also was accomplished at the same season as the Fall, when flowers were appearing on the earth and the pruning-time was come."

14. *O my dove*] The Beloved proceeds in another stanza of four lines still to urge the Bride to come forth from her seclusion in her rock-girt home, in which she is hidden dove-like from the world, and even from one who like himself has climbed the steep hill-side, unless he knows the right turning.

the secret of the stairs] A hidden nook approached by a zig-zag path, such as that described by Robinson at Engedi ('Biblical Researches,' II. p. 288, ed. 1841). In such a nook is the home of the Bride.

15. *Take us the foxes*] The Beloved has asked to see her countenance and hear her voice, and the Bride answers by singing what appears to be a fragment of a vine-dresser's ballad, insinuating the vineyard duties imposed on her by her brethren (i. 6), which prevent her from immediately joining him:

"Catch us the foxes,
Foxes the little ones,
Wasting our vineyards
When our vineyards are blossoming."

"Foxes" (Heb. "shualim") or "jackals." The Hebrew name is applied to both species, and both are fond of grapes. ('Dict. of Bible,' art. *Fox*.) Here their destructive propensities in general are referred to, no grapes existing at the season indicated. The allegorical interpretations which make these foxes symbolize "false teachers" have a basis in Ezek. xiii. 4.

16. *feedeth among the lilies*] Pursues his occupation as a shepherd among congenial scenes and objects of gentleness and beauty. Comp. iv. 5, and vi. 2, 3, and note.

17. *Until the day break*] Or, rather, **until the day breathe**, *i. e.* until the fresh evening breeze (so well known as an object of expectation to the inhabitants of eastern lands) spring up in what is called (Gen. iii. 8) "the cool" or **breathing time of the day** (Vulg. "aura post meridiem").

and the shadows flee] Meaning that they lengthen out, and finally lose their outlines with the sinking and departure of the sun (comp. Jer. vi. 4). As the visit of the Beloved is most naturally conceived of as taking place in the early morning, and the Bride is evidently dismissing him till a later time of day, it seems almost certain that this interpretation is the correct one which makes that time to be evening after sunset. The phrase recurs iv. 6.

mountains of Bether] Three meanings may be assigned to this term. (1) It may indicate a definite locality. "Bether" would then be identical with Bithron, or "the Bithron," a hilly district on the east side of the Jordan valley (2 S. ii. 29), not far from Mahanaim (Song vi. 13). See 'Dict. of the Bible.' art. *Bithron*. (2) It might be rendered "peaked" or "cloven mountains," (ὄρη κοι-

λωμάτων, LXX.), among which gazelles only, or one resembling them, could clamber. (3) Supposing the term to be used in a symbolical sense it might be rendered "mountains of separation" ("of division," marg.), dividing for a time the Beloved from the Bride, obstacles which he must overleap in order to join her. This interpretation seems to be the best, though the local reference need not be abandoned. These mountains reappear as "mountains of spices" at the close of the Song (viii. 14).

NOTES on CHAP. II. 4, 7.

4. There may be a reference here to a custom mentioned by Arabic poets of hanging out a banner over a banqueting-hall; but דגל, and the verbal forms derived from it, are in Scripture used exclusively in a military sense. Compare with above references to Numbers Ps. xx. 5 (6), and Song vi. 4, 10.

7. This interpretation is given in allegorical disguise by the 'Midrash Rabba,' as well as by Rashi and other Rabbinical authorities. It might also be illustrated by a fragment of the erotic poet Cydias, cited by Plato ('Charmides,' 155 D),

"Be shy of love, lest, like the silly fawn
That runs to look a lion in the face,
One heedless gaze bewray thee to thy death."

(The text followed is that of C. F. Hermann, 'Platon. Dial.' Vol. III. Teubner, 1851. See Hermann's Preface, I. II.)

CHAPTER III.

1 *The church's fight and victory in temptation.* 6 *The church glorieth in Christ.*

BY night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

2 I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

3 The watchmen that go about the city found me: *to whom I said*, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

4 *It was* but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

5 [a] I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

[a] chap. 2. 7 & 8. 4.

6 ¶ [b] Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankin-

[b] chap. 8. 5

III. 1—5. *The Bride's first Dream.*

Continuing her monologue of reminiscence the Bride relates to the Chorus what appears to be an imaginary occurrence transacted in a dream (like that of v. 2—8). She is on her bed at dead of night, and seems to be seeking him "whom her soul loveth." She traverses the city seeking him, and after meeting and obtaining no help from the watchmen, suddenly finds the object of her search, and brings him to her mother's house and chamber. This short piece, which might be called "The unrest of love," appears to consist of four stanzas (*vv.* 1—4), of which the first (*v.* 1), and second (*v.* 2), conclude with the refrain, "I sought him, but I found him not;" it is followed by the adjuration to the Chorus (*v.* 5). Critics of principles the most opposed (Mercier, Ewald, Delitzsch) find here (as at v. 2—8) the narration of a dream, and certainly a dream-like tone pervades the whole. The Targum, true to its historico-prophetic scheme of exposition, makes this section typical of the wanderings of Israel after the Holy One in the wilderness, as the next (iii. 6—11) is made to represent their entrance into the land.

CHAP. III. 1. *By night*] Lit. "In the nights," *i.e.* in the night-hours.

2. *I will rise now*] **Come, let me rise.** She speaks to herself, rousing her slumbering will.

3. *The watchmen that go about the city*] The "city" here is apparently not Jerusalem (as at v. 7), but one near the Bride's native home, possibly Shunem.

4. *I held him*] This begins the fourth stanza. The Bride's mother is mentioned again at vi. 9, and viii. 2.

5. *I charge you*] This adjuration has the same meaning as before. See ii. 7, and viii. 4, and notes. It marks another principal pause in the drama.

THIRD PART. ROYAL ESPOUSALS.
III. 6—V. 1.

Principal and central action of the Song; the Bride's entry into the city of David, and

cense, with all powders of the merchant?

7 Behold his bed, which *is* Solomon's; threescore valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8 They all hold swords, *being* expert in war: every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

9 King Solomon made himself [1] a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

10 He made the pillars thereof *of*

[1] Or, *a bed*

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her marriage there with the King. The Targum and other Jewish interpreters regard this part of the poem as symbolizing the "first" entrance of the Church of the Old Testament into the land of promise, and her spiritual espousals, and communion with the King of kings, through the erection of Solomon's temple and the institution of its acceptable worship. Christian Fathers, in a like spirit, make most things here refer to the espousals of the Church with Christ in the Passion and Resurrection, or the communion of Christian souls with Him in meditation thereon (iv. 6).

III. 6—11. *Bridal Procession and Royal Entry.*

Two or more citizens of Jerusalem, or the Chorus of youths, companions of the Bridegroom (Origen), describe the magnificent appearance of the Bride borne in a royal litter, and then that of the King in festive joy wearing a nuptial crown.

6. *Who is this*] Or, "Who is she?" (as at vi. 10), an expression of admiration repeated vi. 10, and viii. 5. In all three places it indicates the approach of the Bride and the commencement of a new part of the Song.

out of the wilderness] Or rather, **up from** (as viii. 5). "Wilderness" here (Heb. "midbar") is not an arid waste, but champaign or pasture-land, in contrast with the cultivated districts and garden-inclosures round the city. Comp. Jer. xxiii. 10; Joel ii. 22; Isai. xlii. 11; Ps. lxv. 11. The deserts in the Peninsula of Sinai being indicated by the same term, Rabbinical interpreters regard the repeated phrase, "she that cometh up from the wilderness," as a designation of the congregation of Israel in her two-fold entrance into the land of promise: the first, that which followed the deliverance from Egypt, and the forty years of wandering, being here alluded to; the second, that of Israel's yet future return from "the wilderness of the peoples" (Ezek. xx. 35), after the deliverance of the Latter Day, being prophesied of at viii. 5.

like pillars of smoke] The phrase recurs Joel ii. 30, expressing one of the images of terror in the latter day: here it is an image of delight and pleasure. Frankincense and other perfumes are burned in such abundance round the bridal equipage that the whole procession appears from the distance to be one of moving wreaths and columns of smoke.

all powders of the merchant] Every kind of spice forming an article of commerce.

7. *Behold his bed, which is Solomon's*] Probably the royal litter or palanquin in which the Bride is borne, provided for her by the King's care and affection from his own stores (hence called "*his* bed"), and surrounded by his own body-guard consisting of **sixty mighties of the mighty men of Israel.** Comp. 2 S. xxiii. 8—39, and 1 Chro. xi. 10—47, whence it appears that David's guard consisted of thirty-seven mighties, seven of whom were captains, and thirty (1 Chro. xii. 4, xxvii. 6) ordinary guardsmen. These thirty are here doubled, with allusion probably to an historical fact, that Solomon's guard consisted of sixty men.

8. *because of fear in the night*] *i. e.* against night alarms. Comp. Ps. xci. 5. The King's affection is expressed not only by the state in which the Bride is conducted to the palace, but also by his solicitude for her ease and safety on the journey. Comp. introductory footnotes on Ps. x. and *vv.* 7—10.

9, 10. *King Solomon made himself a chariot*, &c.] **A stately bed** (Heb. *appiryon*) **hath king Solomon made for himself of woods** (or *trees*) **of the Lebanon.** The word *appiryon* occurs nowhere else in Scripture, and is of doubtful etymology and meaning. It may denote here (1) the Bride's car or litter, now more minutely described by a spectator or a chorus on its nearer approach: or (2) a more magnificent vehicle provided for her reception on her entrance into the city, and in which perhaps the King goes forth to meet her. It has been made under Solomon's own directions of the costliest woods (cedar and pine) of the Lebanon (comp. i. 17); it is furnished with "pillars of silver" supporting a "baldachin" or "canopy of gold" (not "bottom" as in A. V.), and with "**a seat** (not 'covering') of purple cushions," while "its interior is paved with (mosaic work, or tapestry of) love from (not 'for') the daughters of Jerusalem;" the meaning being that this part of the adornment is a gift of love, whereby the female Chorus have testified their goodwill to the Bride, and desire to gratify the King. This interpretation of the last enigmatical clause of *v.* 10 is quite in accordance with the whole tenor of the Song, and its freedom from any thought of jealous grudging or envy. The use of the

silver, the bottom thereof *of* gold, the covering of it *of* purple, the midst thereof being paved *with* love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

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term "appiryon" in post-biblical Hebrew gives support to this view of its meaning here, *e.g.* Mishnah, 'Sotah' IX. 14, where it is said that during the war of Hadrian a prohibition was issued that "no bride should go forth in an appiryon through the city." See Notes below.

11. *daughters of Zion*] Female inhabitants of the city of David (or of Jerusalem generally), so called here to distinguish them from the Bride's companions, who are always addressed by her as "daughters of Jerusalem."

wherewith his mother crowned him] The King's mother is of course Bathsheba, to whom he already owes the crown of his kingdom (1 K. i.). This is the last mention of her in sacred history.

the gladness of his heart] *i.e.* his deepest, purest gladness, greater than "the joy of harvest," or than that of men "who divide the spoil" (Isai. ix. 3), "the joy of the Bridegroom over the Bride" (Isai. lxii. 5). The same expression recurs Isai. xxx. 29, and Ezek. xxxvi. 5.

This last verse, and indeed the whole of this part of the Song (iii. 6—v. 1), is full of difficulty for those interpreters who adopt the hypothesis of the Shepherd-lover. Compare the different and contradictory interpretations of Ewald, Umbreit, Renan, Bunsen, Holtzmann, and Ginsburg. Hitzig boldly cuts the knot, allowing indeed the whole to be (what it evidently is) a royal marriage, in which Solomon is throughout the happy and accepted Bridegroom, but is thereby compelled to regard it as an episode only loosely connected with the main subject of the poem. So also *in part* Holtzmann (Bunsen's 'Bibelwerk,' Vol. VI. pp. 788—791).

NOTES on CHAP. III. 9, 10.

9. "Appiryon," אפריון, is most probably derived from פרה, "ferre, fructus producere," after the analogy of שריון, פדיון, דמיון, with א "prostheticum" (Delitzsch, 'Das Hohelied,' p. 23). There is no necessity to derive it, with Hartmann, Magnus, and more recently Graetz, from the Greek φορεῖον. The analogous term in the cognate Aramaic is פוריא (Fürst, 'Concord.' s.v.), which has still less apparent connection with φορεῖον. Prof. Graetz ('Schir-ha-Schirim,' Wien, 1871, pp. 55—58) endeavours to prove several Greek derivations in the Song, but produces no others so plausible as this.

10. "Bottom," רפידה, from רפד, to stretch out, or spread, is sometimes rendered "stratum, pavimentum," for which may be compared רֶבֶד in later Hebrew = "pavimentum" (Fürst, 'Concord.' s.v. רפידה); and hence the rendering "bottom" in A.V.; but this would introduce a tautology in the description, making רפידתו nearly equivalent to the following תוכו. The Vulgate rendering "reclinatorium" follows the LXX. ἀνάκλιτον, and finds some support in the use of the verb at ii. 5, but the most natural interpretation of רפידה here, in connection with the (silver) "pillars," is that of an "awning" or "canopy" (of gold). "Covering," מרכב, from רכב, is here best rendered "seat." Comp. Lev. xv. 9. At 1 K. v. 6 (E. V. iv. 26) it is = רכב, "chariot."

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Christ setteth forth the graces of the church.* 8 *He sheweth his love to her.* 16 *The church prayeth to be made fit for his presence.*

[a] BEHOLD, thou *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes within thy

[a] chap. 1. 15. & 5. 12

IV. 1—6. *The Bridegroom's commendation of the Bride.*

The King in a lyric song of five stanzas commends the beauty of the Bride by images taken from various scenes and objects in different parts of his kingdom (*vv.* 1—5). The Bride briefly answers (*v.* 6).

CHAP. IV. **1.** *thou hast doves' eyes*] **Thine eyes are doves behind thy veil.** The last word occurs again iv. 3, vi. 7; Isai. xlvii. 2. In all these places the rendering "veil" gives a better sense than "locks," and is that now generally preferred.

that appear from, &c.] Or, "that couch upon Mount Gilead." The point of comparison seems to be the multitudinousness of the flocks seen browsing on the verdant slopes

locks: thy hair *is* as a [b] flock of goats, [1] that appear from mount Gilead.

2 Thy teeth *are* like a flock *of sheep that are even* shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none *is* barren among them.

3 Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech *is* comely: thy temples *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4 Thy neck *is* like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

5 [c] Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

6 [d] Until the day [1] break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

7 [e] Thou *art* all fair, my love; *there is* no spot in thee.

8 ¶ Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse, with me from Leba-

[b] chap. 6. 5, 6.
[1] Or, *that eat of*, &c.
[c] chap. 7. 3.
[d] chap. 2. 17.
[1] Heb. *breathe*.
[e] Eph. 5. 27.

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of the rich pasture-lands (Num. xxxii. 1; Mic. vii. 14), that form a conspicuous object when viewed from Western Palestine ('Dict. of Bible,' art. *Gilead*); but not, as some have supposed, any imagined resemblance between the hair of the animals and that of the Bride. See Note below.

2. *Thy teeth*, &c.] The ellipsis of "sheep" is supplied at vi. 6. The last two clauses might be rendered, "all of them are equal pairs, and none is bereft among them," *i.e.* none has lost her mate. The points of comparison in this simile are of course brilliant whiteness (comp. Gen. xlix. 12), regularity and completeness of number.

3. *thy speech is comely*] Perhaps, "thy mouth," *i.e.* the organ of speech; see Note at end of the Chapter. The next clause is repeated vi. 7.

4. *Thy neck is like the tower of David*] The Bride's neck is repeatedly praised (i. 10, vii. 4). The "tower of David" may be that mentioned Neh. iii. 25—27; Mic. iv. 8. For the custom of hanging shields and other weapons in and upon buildings suited for the purpose, see Ezek. xxvii. 10, 11.

5. Fifth stanza: first half repeated vii. 3.

6. *break*] **Breathe.** The Bride repeating some of her own words at ii. 17, and modestly interrupting the flow of the King's commendations (comp. vii. 9), says that she would now fain withdraw till eventide "to the mount of myrrh and hill of frankincense," some quiet spot, it may be, in the garden of the palace which is the scene of their present meeting (Delitzsch). The dialogue is resumed in the evening (*v.* 7) of the same day.

IV. 7—V. 1. *The King's Invitation.*

The King again meeting the Bride expresses once more his love and admiration in the sweetest and tenderest terms and figures. She is for him "all fair" (*v.* 7) in her spotless purity; a climax to the similar commencements of two former dialogues (i. 15, and iv. 1). He calls her now "Bride" (*v.* 8) for the first time, to mark it as the hour of their espousals, and "Sister-Bride" (iv. 9, 10, 12, v. 1), to express the likeness of thought and disposition which henceforth unites them. At the same time he invites her to leave for his sake her birthplace and its mountain neighbourhood, and live henceforth for him alone.

8. *Come with me from Lebanon*] The right understanding of the whole Song appears to depend on the interpretation of this one verse. The order and collocation of words in the Hebrew is grand and significant. **With me from Lebanon, O Bride, with me from Lebanon thou shalt come, shalt look around** (or **wander forth**) **from the height** (lit. "head") **of Amana, from the height of Shenir and Hermon, from dens of lions, from mountain-haunts of leopards.** It is evidently a solemn invitation from the King in the sense assigned by Theodoret and others, comparing Ps. xlv. 10, 11, "Forget thy people and thy father's house, so shall the king desire thy beauty." Four peaks in the same mountain-system are here named as a poetical periphrasis for northern Palestine, the region in which is situated the native home of the Bride. (1) Amana (another reading for Abana, 2 K. v. 12), standing here for that part of the Anti-libanus which overlooks Damascus, and from which issues the beautiful stream once called by the same name, now the Baradia. (2) Shenir or Senir, another peak of the same range (according to Deut. iii. 9, the Amorite name for Hermon), spoken of here and 1 Chro. v. 23 as distinct from it. (3) Hermon, the celebrated mountain which forms the culminating point of the Anti-libanus, on the north-eastern border of the Holy Land. Comp. Ps. lxxxix. 12, and note. It has three peaks of nearly equal elevation, whence perhaps the plural form, "the Hermonim," of Ps. xlii. 6. Shenir may have been the proper

non: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir [f] and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.

9 Thou hast [1] ravished my heart, my sister, *my* spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

10 How fair is thy love, my sister, *my* spouse! [g] how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!

11 Thy lips, O *my* spouse, drop *as* the honeycomb: honey and milk *are* under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments *is* like the smell of Lebanon.

12 A garden [†] inclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

13 Thy plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; [1] camphire, with spikenard,

14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus

[f] Deut. 3. 9.

[1] Or, *taken away my heart.*

[g] chap. 1. 2.

[†] Heb. *barred.*

[1] Or, *cypress.*

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name of one of these "Hermons" ('Dict. of Bible,' art. *Hermon;* Tristram, 'Land of Israel,' pp. 602—609). (4) Lebanon, properly the western range overlooking the Mediterranean, but here used as a common designation for the whole mountain-system, the rough wild home of beasts of prey (comp. Hab. ii. 17), in contrast to the king's own royal City of Peace (Jerusalem). Leopards are still not unfrequently seen there, but the lion has long since disappeared.

look from the top of Amana] The word rendered "look" is variously interpreted. The prospect from the Anti-libanus over the plain of Damascus, and from Hermon in every direction (Tristram, p. 609), is said to be surpassingly grand and beautiful, and the King *may* be promising the Bride the enjoyment of it in his company (so Delitzsch); comp. vii. 4. But the context favours the second interpretation given above, "wander forth," which is that of the LXX., the Peshito, and Kimchi.

9—11. Expansion of the opening words (*v.* 7), "thou art all fair." The similes employed refer no longer to mere graces of corporeal form, as might be said of the former description (*vv.* 1—5), but to those of adornment, speech and gesture, as expressions of inward character and sentiment.

9. *Thou hast ravished my heart*] Some would render it, "filled me with heart," *i.e.* courage, enthusiasm. The Syriac use of the word supports this rendering, but the context and a comparison with vi. 5 favour that of the A.V. See note on Job xi. 12.

with one of thine eyes] Rather, **with one look of thine** (Gesenius).

10. *How fair is thy love*] **Loves**, or **endearments**—not the inward sentiment is the thing here meant, but the various forms of its expression (comp. i. 2, and vii. 12).

11. *honeycomb*] Heb. "nôpheth," properly not the honeycomb itself, but that which runs spontaneously from it. The literal rendering would be, **Thy lips distil a dropping** (of pure honey). Comp. Prov. xxiv. 13, 14, "The dropping (of the honeycomb) is sweet upon thy palate, (and) so (shall be) the knowledge of wisdom to thy soul." Perhaps "nôpheth" might still better be rendered *fragrance, aroma.* Comp. Prov. vii. 17, *naphti,* = I have perfumed.

the smell of thy garments] Comp. Gen. xxvii. 27 (of which there seems to be here a reminiscence), and Hosea xiv. 6, with Dr Pusey's note.

12—15. The loveliness and purity of the Bride are now set forth under the image of a paradise or garden fast barred against intruders, filled with rarest plants of excellent fragrance, and watered by abundant streams. Prov. v. 15—20 has images similar to those in this and other parts of the Song.

12. *A garden inclosed*] Or (better, as in margin), "barred." Comp. viii. 9.

a fountain sealed] *i.e.* a well-spring covered with a stone (Gen. xxix. 3), and sealed with "the king's own signet" (Dan. vi. 17; comp. Matt. xxvii. 66). Comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 19; Prov. v. 18; Deut. xxxiii. 28; Ps. lxviii. 26.

13. *orchard of pomegranates*] Heb. "pardēs," which Ibn Ezra interprets, "a garden planted with one kind of tree"—hence, perhaps, the rendering of A.V. "orchard," here and Eccles. ii. 5. The word occurs once more Neh. ii. 8, and is there rendered "forest." On the etymology of this difficult word and its bearing on the date assigned to the Song, see Excursus. The pomegranate was for the Jews a sacred fruit, and a characteristic product of the Land of Promise (comp. Exod. xxviii. 33, 34; Num. xx. 5; Deut. viii. 8; 1 K. vii. 18, 20). It is frequently mentioned in the Song, and always in connection with the Bride (comp. iv. 3, vi. 7, viii. 2). It abounds to this day in the ravines of the Lebanon.

camphire] **Cyprus** or **henna**. See note i. 14.

13, 14, 15. Seven kinds of spices (some of them with Indian names, *e.g.* aloes, spikenard, saffron; Delitzsch, p. 22) are enumerated as found in this symbolic garden. They are for the most part pure exotics which have formed for countless ages articles of commerce in the

and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

16 ¶ Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, *that* the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

East, and were brought at that time in Solomon's ships from southern Arabia, the great Indian Peninsula, and perhaps the islands of the Indian Archipelago. Such exotics may have been cultivated by Solomon in some of his "pardesim," but the picture here is best regarded as a purely ideal one, having no corresponding reality but in the Bride herself. The beauties and attractions of both north and south, of Lebanon with its streams of sparkling water and fresh mountain-air, of En-gedi with its tropical climate and henna plantations, of the spice-groves of Arabia Felix, and of the rarest products of the distant mysterious Ophir, must all combine to furnish out one glorious representation, "Thou art all fair!"

16. *Awake, O north wind*] The Bride's brief reply, declaring her affection for the King and willingness to belong to him.

my garden] in the first clause of the verse becomes "his" in the second.

NOTES on CHAP. IV. 1, 3.

1. "That couch upon." For this rendering of שנלשו מן, Fürst ('Concord.' s.v. גלש) refers not only to the Arabic جلس but also to the Hebrew חלש, "morbo decumbere." Graetz disputes the Arabic derivation with some weighty arguments (pp. 49, 50), but the sense of his rendering, "gleich einer Ziegenheerde, geglättet, von Gilead's Bergen," is not very clear. Rosenmüller's "quæ detondent a monte Gilead, sc. herbas et gramina," comparing Virgil, 'Ecl.' x. 7, would perhaps be the best rendering if that sense of גלש (detondere) could be sufficiently established. The "appear from" of A.V. follows the ἀπεκαλύφθησαν of the LXX.

3. Fürst, sub voce מדבר.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Christ awaketh the church with his calling.* 2 *The church having a taste of Christ's love is sick of love.* 9 *A description of Christ by his graces.*

I AM come into my garden, my sister, *my* spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, [1] yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

[1] Or, *and be drunken with loves.*

CHAP. V. **1.** *my sister, my spouse*] So the King addresses the Bride (**my Sister-Bride**) for the last time, declaring his supreme satisfaction and love.

I have eaten my honeycomb] Heb. "ya'ri," literally, "my reed," or "my wood," *i.e.* the substance itself, or portions of it in which the comb is formed. The bees in Palestine form their combs not only in the hollows of trees and rocks, but also in reeds by the riverbanks. Rashi interprets this clause, "I have eaten my cane with my sugar," taking the Hebrew word ("debash") in the wide sense which it bears in Scripture, as signifying any liquid lusciously sweet. The King's meaning appears to be that which Rashi assigns (in the form of a singular allegorical interpretation): "All pleases me in thee, there is nothing to despise or cast away;" another change rung on the opening sentence, "Thou art all fair."

eat, O friends] These last words are best understood as a salutation from the King to his assembled guests, or to the Chorus of young men his companions (Origen), bidding them partake at the banquet in the gladness of his heart (iii. 11). A parallel might be found in Ps. xxii. 26, where Messiah at the close of His sufferings salutes his friends, the poor, and as they eat at His table gives them His royal blessing: "Vivat cor vestrum in æternum!" So ends this day of outward festivity and supreme heart-joy. The Song of Songs attains its highest elevation, and its former half is fitly closed. The second half of the poem commences (*v.* 2) with a change of tone and reaction of feeling similar to that of ch. iii. 1. It terminates with the sealing (viii. 6, 7) of yet deeper love.

2 ¶ I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.

3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*, and my bowels were moved [1] for him.

[1] Or, (as some read) *in me.*

5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with* † sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

† Heb. *passing*, or, *running about.*

6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

7 The watchmen that went about

FOURTH PART. SEEKING AND FINDING.
V. 2—VI. 9.

V. 2—8. *The Bride's second Dream*

(Commencement of the Second Half of the Poem.)

Some time may be supposed to have elapsed since the Bride's solemn espousals with the King in ch. iv. 7—v. 1. A transient cloud of doubt or estrangement is now passing over her soul, as by the relation of this dream she intimates to her friends. She has lost the society of her Beloved, but not his affection, and seeks reunion with him (*v.* 8). Ancient allegorical interpreters were not insensible to this change of tone (which ought to have suggested a better division of the chapters, ch. v. beginning with *v.* 2), and have variously accounted for it. The Targum, for instance, makes it symbolize the condition and feelings of Israel during the Babylonish captivity, when the glories and privileges of Solomon's temple (adumbrated in ch. iv. and v. 1) were no more, and the manifested Presence of the Holy One had been withdrawn. Israel in exile seeks the Lord (*v.* 8), and will find Him again in the second temple (vi. 3—9). The Bride's recital here of her second dream closely resembles that of the first dream (iii. 1—5), but is richer in details and somewhat more sad in tone.

2. *I sleep, but my heart waketh*] A poetical periphrasis for "I dream." Corn. à Lapide aptly quotes the ancient saying: "Dreams are the vigils of those who slumber, hopes are waking dreams."

the voice] Or, "sound." Comp. ii. 8, note. She hears him knocking before he speaks.

my sister, my love, my dove, &c.] True love rejoices in every kind of bond (Bossuet). So, afterwards, the Bride says to him, "O that thou wert as my brother," in every sense mine.

my undefiled] Heb. "my perfect one." Vulg. "immaculata mea." Comp. iv. 7.

my head is filled with dew] Some allegorists compare Matt. viii. 20, and Ibn Ezra, in the same spirit, Hagg. i. 4, where the Lord complains of the non-completion of the second temple, wherein He would fain renew communion with His people.

3. *I have put off*, &c.] She makes trivial excuses, as one in a dream.

4. *put in his hand*] **through** (lit. "from") **the hole** (of the lock), in order to raise the pins by which the bolt was fastened. The Oriental mode of fastening doors here referred to differs from ours. The lock is a hollow piece of wood attached to the doorpost, into which a sliding-bolt is made to run. As soon as the bolt has been driven home a number of pins drop into holes prepared in it for their reception. To raise these pins, and so enable the bolt to be withdrawn, is to unfasten the lock. This is commonly done by means of the key ("maphteach," opener), but may often be accomplished by the fingers only dipped in paste or some other adhesive substance. For such a purpose the Beloved inserts his fingers here anointed with the costly unguent, which will presently distil on those of the Bride when she rises to open to him. (See Lane's description with sketch, 'Mod. Egypt,' Introd. 5th edit., p. 19.)

5. *sweet smelling myrrh*] Lit. "overflowing, liquid," or (as in margin) "running myrrh," that which first and spontaneously exudes, *i.e.* the freshest, finest myrrh. Even in withdrawing he has left this token of his unchanged love.

6, 7. *I opened*, &c.] Following more exactly the order of words in the Hebrew we might render thus:

Then opened I to my Beloved,
But my Beloved withdrew himself, was gone;
My soul went (from me) **as he spake;**
I sought him, but I found him not;
I called him, but he answered me not!
The watchmen, they that go their rounds in the city, found me;
They smote me, wounded me;
They took my veil from off me
—The watchmen of the walls!

the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, † that ye tell him, that I *am* sick of love.

† Heb. *what.*

9 ¶ What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, O thou fairest among women? what *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

10 My beloved *is* white and ruddy, † the chiefest among ten thousand.

11 His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* ‖ bushy, *and* black as a raven.

12 [a] His eyes *are* as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* † fitly set.

13 His cheeks *are* as a bed of

† Heb. *a standard-bearer.* ‖ Or, *curled.* a chap. 1. 15. & 4. 1. † Heb. *sitting in fulness,* that is, *fitly placed, and set as a precious stone in the foil of a ring.*

Note the pathetic dream-like repetition—"the watchmen of the walls."

8. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem*] The dream is therefore related to the Chorus. The Bride, now awake, is still seeking her Beloved. The dream of his departure and her feelings under it have symbolized a real emotion of her waking heart.

V. 9—VI. 3. *The Bride's commendation of the Beloved.*

The Chorus, replying to the Bride's charge (*v.* 8) with the question, "What is thy Beloved more than another?" &c. (*v.* 9), give her the occasion, which she eagerly seizes, for a glorious description of his beauty and sweetness of whom she is in search (*vv.* 10—16). It is also her response to the praises of the King on her bridal-day (iv. 1—5 and 10—15). In the allegorical interpretations of Jewish expositors all is here spoken by exiled Israel of the Holy One Whose praise she sings "by the waters of Babylon" (Ps. cxxxvii. 1), the various anthropomorphic figures being regarded as a series of symbols, like those in Ezek. i. 26—28; Dan. vii. 9, 10; Rev. i. 13—20. Christian interpreters apply the description directly to the Incarnate Son, partly in His Eternal Godhead, but chiefly in His risen and glorified Humanity. Devout Jews still adhere to an ancient liturgical use of these verses in laying out their dead, thus making, it would seem, a remarkably near though unconscious approach to the Christian application. (The formula is given in a Collection of ancient Hebrew Offices for the Sick and Dying and for the Departed (see Knöpflmacher, 'Mawar Jabok' [Wien, 1865, 4to], leaf 39).

10. *My beloved is white and ruddy*] (Comp. 1 S. xvi. 12.) "The complexion most admired in youth" (so Rashi and other Jewish interpreters, remarking that He Who is elsewhere called "the Ancient of Days" is here described as the Ever-Young). "White in His virgin-purity," says St Jerome, "and ruddy in His Passion." The Targumist refers to Dan. vii. 9, "White in His raiment as the snow, but His throne like the fiery flame."

the chiefest among ten thousand] Lit. "a bannered one among a myriad," *i.e.* a leader of ten thousand warriors. So the Targum (again referring to Dan. vii. 9), "His banner is over myriads of angels." Comp. vii. 4. But the word may perhaps be taken in a wider sense as equivalent to "marked out," "distinguished," or, as we say, "signalized" (comp. the Latin "insignis"). The rendering of the Vulgate, "electus ex millibus," conveys this sense. Comp. Ps. xlv. 2.

11. *His head is as the most fine gold*] "Golden-crowned" perhaps (comp. Ps. xxi. 3, where "pure" represents the same word as "most fine" here), or (better) noble and precious as the finest gold. Lam. iv. 2.

his locks are bushy] Waving branches or shoots. The Septuagint and Vulgate rendering, *elatæ palmarum*, suggests a good sense for the word, and a pleasing image for the eye: **his locks are waving branches of the palm.**

12. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves*] **His eyes are doves.** The comparison is to the doves themselves seen **by streams of water washing in milk** (*i.e.* milk-white), **and sitting on fulness** (*i.e.* on the full or abundant water-flood). The image is that of i. 15, iv. 1, amplified. Ibn Ezra compares Hab. i. 13, where the prophet speaks of the "pure eyes" of the Holy One.

fitly set] This rendering supposes that the eyes within their sockets are compared to precious stones set in the foil of a ring. So Mercier and the Rabbinical commentators, introducing another and less pleasing image than that of the doves. The literal rendering given in the margin, *sitting in fulness*, seems best explained by reference to the "rivers of waters" immediately preceding. So the Vulgate, "resident super flumina plenissima," *i.e.* the milk-white doves themselves, sitting by full streams of water, or reflected in their flittings athwart the glassy surface, present images of the calm repose and vivid glances of the full pure lustrous eyes of the Beloved.

13. *sweet flowers*] So Kimchi. The marginal rendering is the right one, "towers of perfumes," *i.e.* plants with fragrant leaves and flowers trained on trellis-work.

Or, towers of perfumes.

spices, *as* [1] sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

14 His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.

15 His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

† Heb. *His palate.*

16 † His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER VI.

1 The church professeth her faith in Christ. 4 Christ sheweth the graces of the church, 10 and his love towards her.

WHITHER is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3 [a] I *am* my beloved's, and my

[a] chap. 2. 16. & 7. 10.

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his lips] **are lilies dropping liquid myrrh.** See note on *v.* 5 above. The Greeks called the white lily "lirion," the red lily "crinon" (Plin. 'H. N.' XXI. 11). The latter is the term used by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi. 28). The scarlet martagon, which abounds in the Levant, may be the flower here meant ('Dict. of Bible,' art. *Lily*). Perhaps, however, the fragrance of the flowers, or the delicate curl of the lip-like petals (Bossuet), is here the point of comparison, and the colour is lost sight of.

14. *His hands*] **are golden rings** or **cylinders,** as the word (*gelilim*) is rendered by some both here and at Esth. i. 6. (The winding up of the Thorah-rolls on their cylindrical rods is still in the Synagogue called *gelilah.*) In the one case the fingers of the bent or closed hand would be compared to a massive ring or set of rings; in the other, as outstretched or straightened, they are likened to a row of golden rods or cylinders.

the beryl] Heb. *tarshish*, a precious stone mentioned Exod. xxviii. 20; Ezek. i. 16, x. 9, xxviii. 13, and Dan. x. 6, probably the chrysolite of the ancients (so called from its *gold* colour), the modern topaz (King, 'Antique Gems,' pp. 165, 337). "Tarshish" is rendered "chrysolite" in margin of A. V. at Ezek. xxviii. 13.

The next clause might be rendered **his body** (the Hebrew term applies to the whole body, from the shoulders downwards to the thighs) **is a piece of ivory workmanship overlaid with sapphires.** The sapphire of the ancients seems to have been the lapis lazuli (King, 'Ant. Gems,' pp. 44—46), and (according to the Editor of this Commentary) named *chesbet* in a vast number of Egyptian inscriptions of all ages, generally in connection with turquois and after gold and silver. Bossuet and others suppose the sapphires here to indicate the purple of the kingly robe or a jewelled girdle, and the "sockets" (or **bases**) "of fine gold" in the next verse to stand for the golden sandals in which the royal feet are shod. It seems, however, more likely that the feet themselves are compared to "fine gold," as the head in *v.* 11. Comp. Rev. i. 15.

15. *his countenance*] Or, **his appearance** (his whole port and mien, but especially head and countenance) "is as the Lebanon." Comp. vii. 5.

16. *he is altogether lovely*] Lit. **the whole of him desires** or **delights.** So just before, "his mouth" all "sweetnesses" ("for breath, and speech, and smile," Bossuet), the plural substantives expressing the notion of the superlative. "Totus est desiderabilis, totus est amor" (Aquinas ap. Bossuet). Theodoret, applying to our Lord the whole description, interprets well its last term: "Being at a loss for other terms of praise she names Him finally by one Name. Why should I thus endeavour to express His beauty piecemeal when He is in Himself and altogether the One longed-for, drawing all to love, compelling all to love, and inspiring with a longing (for His company) not only those who see, but also those who hear?"

CHAP. VI. **1, 2.** *Whither is thy beloved gone*, &c.] This question put by the Chorus, and the answer it receives from the Bride, shew that the loss and seeking are not to be taken too seriously. The Bride, knowing better than her friends where the Beloved is to be found, answers, without hesitation, that he is gone down into his garden and its spice-beds to feed his flock (in his character of Shepherd, comp. i. 7), and gather lilies (for her—so Bossuet); actions contradictory and irrational if the words be literally understood. What the Bride means is, that he, of whom she speaks, is a Royal Shepherd (possessed of a garden of rarest spices), and her own true friend to whom she also belongs, her "Shepherd among lilies."

3. *I am my beloved's*, &c.] Repeated from ii. 16, with a significant inversion. In that day of early love her first boast was her

beloved *is* mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

4 ¶ Thou *art* beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as *an army* with banners.

5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for [1] they have overcome me: thy hair *is* [b] as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

[1] Or, *they have puffed me up.*
[b] chap. 4. 1, 2.

6 Thy teeth *are* as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and *there is* not one barren among them.

7 As a piece of a pomegranate *are* thy temples within thy locks.

8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

9 My dove, my undefiled is *but* one; she *is* the *only* one of her mother, she *is* the choice *one* of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; *yea*, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

10 ¶ Who *is* she *that* looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon,

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possession of him, "My Beloved is mine;" now bound to him by closer ties, she begins by confessing that she is *his*. Comp. vii. 10. Thus invoked he at once appears and addresses her.

VI. 4—9. *The Beloved's commendation of the Bride*,

corresponding in part to that formerly given on their bridal-day (iv. 1—6). The section might be entitled, "Renewed declaration of love after brief estrangement."

4. *Thou art beautiful*] Or, **fair**, as the word is elsewhere rendered in the A. V. of the Song (i. 15, 16, ii. 10, 13, iv. 1, 7). It is the fourth time that the Bride is thus addressed at the commencement of a fresh dialogue.

Tirzah...Jerusalem] Named together as the then two fairest cities of the land. For Jerusalem compare Ps. xlviii. 2. "Tirzah" (*i. e.* "Grace" or "Beauty") was an old Canaanitish royal city (Josh. xii. 24). It became again a royal residence during the reigns of Baasha and his three successors in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, and may well therefore have been famed for its beauty in the time of Solomon.

terrible as, &c.] **Awe-inspiring as the bannered** (hosts): some would add "to the wanton or impure," but needlessly. There is no hint here of any assault on the Bride's innocence or virtue. The warlike image, like others in the Song, serves to enhance the charm of its assured peace.

5. *Turn away thine eyes*] Even for the King the gentle eyes of the Bride have an awe-striking majesty. Such is the condescension of love. Now follows (*vv.* 5—7) the longest of the repetitions which abound in the Song, marking the continuance of the King's affection as when first solemnly proclaimed (iv. 1—6). The Bride is the same for him still as on the day of their espousals. Allegorical interpreters have seized and variously applied this thought. The two descriptions belong, according to some (Christian) expositors, to the Church of different periods, *e.g.* to the primitive Church in the splendour of her first vocation, and to the Church under Constantine; while others (Jewish) make them apply to "the congregation of Israel" under the first and second temples respectively. So Ibn Ezra, following the Targum: "The Beloved repeats the same things here to shew that it is still his own true Bride to whom he speaks, the sameness in the features proving it."

8. *There are threescore queens*, &c.] An allusion to what may have been historical fact when the Song was written. The numbers (according to 1 K. xi. 2, 3) were afterwards enormously increased.

9. *My dove*] The King proceeds in a yet tenderer strain to contrast the Bride with all these other claimants for her royal estate or favour. She not only outshines them all for him, but herself has received from them disinterested blessing and praise:

"One only is my dove, my perfect One,
Her Mother's only-loved One she,
The darling one of her that gave her birth;
The daughters gazed on her and called her blessed,
The queens and concubines, and sang her praise."

Allegorical interpreters have found it difficult to assign to this passage in all its details a good mystical sense, but in its ethical significance it is invaluable as a divine witness to the principle of monogamy, under the Old Testament and in the luxurious age of Solomon.

FIFTH PART. HOMEWARD THOUGHTS. VI. 10—VIII. 4.

VI. 10—13. *The Shulamite.*

This part of the Song commences with a short dialogue between the Bride and the Chorus, who address her, here only, as the Shulamite, and beg her to perform for their entertainment a sacred dance (see note on vii. 1) of her own country (vi. 10—13). The Bride, after complying with their request,

clear as the sun, *and* terrible as *an army* with banners?

11 I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, *and* to see whether the vine flourished, *and* the pomegranates budded.

12 † Or ever I was aware, my soul [1] made me *like* the chariots of Ammi-nadib.

13 Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company [1] of two armies.

† Heb. *I knew not.*

[1] Or, *set me on the chariots of my willing people.*

[1] Or, *of Mahanaim.*

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while they sing some stanzas in her praise (vii. 1—5), and receiving fresh commendations from the King (vii. 6—10), invites him to return with her to her mother's house (vii. 11—viii. 4). She appears throughout, in the midst of courtly praise and honour, somewhat in the position of an exile longing to revisit her home. The Targum, followed by many Jewish allegorists, interprets the whole as still referring to the times of the second temple, and the present dispersion of Israel, during which, God continuing to vouchsafe His mercy, Israel prays for final restoration, the coming of Messiah, and the glory of the latter day. Christian interpreters have made similar applications to the now militant Church looking for the Second Advent, or to the ancient Synagogue praying for the Incarnation.

10. *Who is she*] Or, **this**, as at iii. 6; see note there. The question is asked by the Chorus.

as the morning] The glorious beauty of the Bride bursts upon them like a second **dawn** (so the word ought to be rendered here, as at Josh. vi. 15), as she comes forth to meet them at the commencement of another day. Peculiar poetical words are used for "sun" and "moon." The moon is called *Lebanah*, "White One," the sun *Chammah*, "Burning Heat." (The same terms are applied to sun and moon in Isai. xxiv. 23, and xxx. 26.)

11, 12. *I went down*] The Bride answers, recalling the occasion on which she first met with the King, and won the love which has thus exalted her. Her words might be thus paraphrased: "You speak of me as a glorious beauty; I was lately but a simple maiden engaged in rustic toils. I went down one day into the **walnut**-garden" (Hebr. *egôz;* the walnut, according to Josephus, abounded on the shores of Lake Gennesaret, Joseph. 'Bell. Jud.' III. x. 8, and is still common in Northern Palestine, Tristram, 'Nat. Hist. of Bible,' pp. 413, 414) "to inspect the young plants of the vale" (*i.e.* the wady, or watercourse, with now verdant banks in the early spring after the rainy season), "and to watch the budding and blossoming of vine and pomegranate" (comp. notes of season at ii. 11—13). "Then, suddenly, ere I was myself aware, my soul" (the soul, the seat of the affections, is here the love-bound heart; comp. i. 7, and iii. 1, 2, 3, 4) "had made me the chariot of a lordly people" (*i.e.* an exalted personage, one who rides on the high places of the earth; comp. 2 K. ii. 12, and xiii. 14, where Elijah and Elisha, as the spiritual leaders of the nation, are designated as "the chariot and cavalry of Israel," compare also Isai. xxii. 18). This last clause is another instance of the love for military similitudes in the writer of the Song.

Ammi-nadib] Lit. **my people a noble one.** The reference is either to Israel at large as a wealthy and dominant nation under Solomon, or to the Bride's own people (the Shulamites) in particular, to the chief place among whom, by her union with the King, she is now exalted.

13. *Return, return*] About to withdraw, the Bride is recalled by the Chorus, desiring yet a little longer to contemplate a grace and beauty which has won all hearts. The plural ("that we may gaze on thee") indicates the Chorus as the speakers. The King has not yet appeared.

O Shulamite] Probably the same as "Shunamite," *i.e.* a native of the town or district of Shunem, situated in the territory of Issachar (Josh. xix. 18), on the slopes of the Jebel-el-Duhy, or Little Hermon, overlooking the plain of Jezreel (comp. 1 K. i. 3; 2 K. iv. 8—12). It is now called Solam (Robinson, 'Researches,' III. p. 402). Some (*e.g.* Döpke) conjecture that *Shulammith* (the Hebrew form of the appellation) is here equivalent to *Shelomith*, the feminine of *Shelomoh* (Solomon), marking the Bride's relation to him as his wife or "sister-bride" (iv. 9, v. 2, viii. 1), who takes even her name from him. Comp. viii. 10 (and note), where the assumption of a paronomasia is much more probable.

What will ye see] **Look** or **gaze at.** The Bride's modest reply, taking up their words, and wondering at their request. The Chorus answer with a further petition.

As it were the company of two armies] Or, rather, **the dance of Mahanaim** (see margin). The word rendered "company" generally designates a festival or sacred dance. But what is meant by the dance of Mahanaim? The reply can only be conjectural. (1) Mahanaim was a Levitical city (Josh. xxi. 34, 38), among the mountains of Gilead, deriving probably both its sacred character and its name ("the two-fold camp") from the angelic vision there vouchsafed to Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 1—3). Annual festivals may have been

held in memory of this event, at which the maidens came forth in the dances as at Shiloh (Judg. xxi. 21), so that "the dance of Mahanaim" would simply be a well-known sacred dance, taking its name from the locality in which it originated. (2) The word "Mahanaim" became in later Hebrew an ordinary designation for "the Angels" or "Angelic Hosts" (Delitzsch). Some accordingly would render here "a dance as it were of angel-choirs," *i.e.* one of peculiar grace and beauty, "perform for us some beautiful dance like those of the angel-choirs in heaven" (Döpke, Delitzsch). The former of these interpretations is to be preferred. Nor is there anything incongruous with Oriental custom in a company of ladies asking one of their number to dance before them. (Niebuhr's 'Travels in Arabia,' Engl. transl., Vol. I. Sect. i. ch. 7.) See Note below.

NOTE on CHAP. VI. 13.

company of two armies] In thus translating המחנים A. V. follows the Ancient Versions, LXX. and Vulgate, and the Rabbinical commentators (Rashi, Ibn Ezra), though missing the reference to a dance. Graetz contends that המחנים cannot be here a proper name, on account of the definite article. Delitzsch seems to have been the first among modern interpreters, and hitherto to have stood alone, in putting this request and the following song (vii. 1—5) into the mouth of the Chorus (instead of the King). Graetz now takes strongly the same view.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *A further description of the church's graces.* 10 *The church professeth her faith and desire.*

HOW beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs *are* like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

2 Thy navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not † liquor: thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

† Heb. *mixture.*

3 [a] Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes *that are* twins.

[a] chap. 4. 5.

4 Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory; thine eyes *like* the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy

VII. 1—5. *The Dance of Mahanaim.*

The Shulamite complies with the request of her attendants, and as she glides before them in the dance they sing in further commendation of her beauty of form and grace of movement (Delitzsch). The description borrows images (like those of ch. iv. v. and vi.) from the whole range of nature and art in various parts of the Hebrew monarchy, differing however from all others in one respect, that the forms of beauty here enumerated are contemplated as in active movement before the eyes of the spectator. Beginning with the sandalled feet, as was natural in speaking of a dancing figure, it ends with the head and its wealth of native ornament, reversing the order of description in iv. 1—5. It consists, like that, of five stanzas nearly coinciding with the verses in the text.

CHAP. VII. 1. First stanza. *How beautiful*] **are thy steps in the sandals.** Comp. Isai. xxvi. 6, "steps of the needy" (in the Hebrew the same word). The Bride's feet are seen in motion in the dance. So in the following clause "joints" might be rendered **circling movements.**

prince's daughter] Or, daughter of a noble; the Bride is of honourable though not of kingly birth.

like jewels] The image suggested is that of large well-formed pearls or other jewels skilfully strung or linked together.

2. Second stanza. The first clause might be rendered, "Thy lap is like a moon-shaped bowl where mixed wine faileth not." The wine in the bowl rising to the brim adds to the beauty of the vessel, and gives a more pleasing image to the eye. Ibn Ezra interprets, "thy girdle is like a moon-shaped bowl," or "bears a moon-shaped ornament," comparing for the latter rendering Isai. iii. 18, where the word rendered here in our version "round" occurs in the plural as the name of a feminine ornament, and is there rendered "round tires like the moon;" "moonlets" would have been a better rendering.

set about with lilies] We are probably to think of the contrast of colours, the flowers, it may be, representing the purple of the robe. So Ibn Ezra, "The heap of wheat is not seen because covered by the lilies."

3. Third stanza; to complete which must be added the first clause of *v.* 4. The two similes are repeated from iv. 4, 5, but in inverse order.

4. *a tower of ivory*] should be **the tower of ivory**, the allusion being to some

nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

5 Thine head upon thee *is* like [1] Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king *is* [†] held in the galleries.

6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

7 This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters *of grapes.*

8 I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;

9 And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth *down* [†] sweetly, causing the lips [1] of those that are asleep to speak.

10 ¶ [b] I *am* my beloved's, and his desire *is* toward me.

son. b. d.

† Heb. *straightly.* 1 Or, *of the ancient.* b chap. 2. 16. & 6. 3.

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particular tower, built probably by Solomon, in whose reign ivory is specially mentioned as an article of commerce (1 K. x. 22).

thine eyes] The rest of the verse forms the Fourth stanza.

fishpools in Heshbon] should be simply **pools**, there being no allusion to *fish* in the original word. Our translators were probably misled by the "piscinæ" of the Vulgate. Among the ruins of Heshbon still remain "a number of deep wells cut in the rock, and a large reservoir of water," on the south side of the town (Burckhardt, p. 365, Porter, 'Handbook,' p. 298). The simile well sets forth the appearance of a large clear liquid eye. Comp. v. 12, and note.

gate of Bath-rabbim] Some take this for the gate looking towards Rabbath-Ammon on the north side of the city. In that case the "pools" here mentioned could not be the "reservoir" of Burckhardt. The Vulgate (following Sept.) renders, "Porta filiæ multitudinis," regarding Bath-rabbim as equivalent to "populous city." Lam. i. 1, or as indicating the gate itself as the scene of numerous gatherings. So Rashbam.

thy nose] Better perhaps "face" or "brow," as the same word is rendered Gen. iii. 19, xix. 21 (margin), xlviii. 11, &c. The ascending order of the description would be thus preserved, the brow following the eyes as they the neck.

the tower of Lebanon] Possibly "the house of the forest of Lebanon" or part of it (1 K. vii. 2 and ix. 19), built by Solomon in the early part of his reign. So Rashi, following the 'Midrash Rabba.' Or possibly a watch-tower erected by David to overawe Damascus after his war with Hadadezer (2 S. viii. 6).

5. Fifth stanza. *Thine head upon thee*] Compare and contrast with v. 15. The King's aspect is there likened to the majestic heights of Lebanon, the Bride's head here to the soft and rounded top of Carmel. The rendering "crimson" in the margin takes "Carmel" here as the name of a colour, equivalent to *carmîl*, our "carmine," rendered "crimson" at 2 Chro. ii. 7, 14, and iii. 14. So Ibn Ezra and other Rabbinical authorities. This interpretation is favoured by the parallelism with "purple," but would deprive us of a beautiful image.

hair...like purple] The ancient purple was of different shades, from bright red to a deep violet black. The deepest shade is here meant.

the king] No definite article in the Hebrew. The indefinite—"**a king is bound in the tresses** or **windings** of thy hair"—is much more poetical. These last words indicate the King's approach, who is the next speaker.

VII. 6—10. *The King and the Bride.*

A brief dialogue, *vv.* 6—9[a] being spoken by the King, *v.* 9[b] and *v.* 10 by the Bride.

6. *How fair and how pleasant*] Comp. i. 16. The words are not addressed to the Bride, but express a general sentiment, one of the main thoughts of the poem:

How fair, and what a charm hast thou,
O Love! among delightsome things!

Comp. ii. 7, and viii. 6, 7, with notes.

7. *This thy stature*] The King now addresses the Bride, comparing her to palm, vine, and apple-tree for nobility of form and pleasantness of fruit; and the utterances of her mouth to sweetest wine.

9. *for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly*] Words of the Bride interrupting the King (Delitzsch, Hengstenberg), and finishing his sentence, **that goeth smoothly** or pleasantly **for my Beloved** (the A. V. here is one of the numerous instances of needless departure from the order of words in the Hebrew). Comp. Prov. xxiii. 31, where the same epithet is applied to wine, and there rendered "moveth itself aright."

10. *his desire is toward me*] Lit. "his desire is over me," *i.e.* either (1) He is my Lord and Master, with allusion to Gen. iii. 16, comp. iv. 7, or (2) all his affection has me for its object. The comparison of ii. 16 and vi. 3 confirms the latter interpretation. The Bride is for the King a true Hephzi-bah, Isai. lxiii. 4, one in whom is all his delight. She proceeds to exercise her power over his loving will.

11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

12 Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, *whether* the tender grape †appear, *and* the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

† Heb. *open*.

13 The [c]mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates *are* all manner of pleasant *fruits*, new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

[c] Gen. 30. 14.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The love of the church to Christ.* 6 *The vehemency of love.* 8 *The calling of the Gentiles.* 14 *The church prayeth for Christ's coming.*

O THAT thou *wert* as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! *when* I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, †I should not be despised.

† Heb. *they should not despise me.*

2 I would lead thee, *and* bring thee into my mother's house, *who* would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of [a]spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.

[a] Prov. 9. 2.

3 [b]His left hand *should be* under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

[b] chap. 2. 6.

4 [c]I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, †that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, until he please.

[c] chap. 2. 7. & 3. 5.

† Heb. *why should ye stir up, or why, &c.*

5 [d]Who *is* this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her

[d] chap. 3. 6.

VII. 11.—VIII. 4. *The Bride's Invitation*, responsive and antithetical to that of the King on the day of their espousals, in which he had asked her to forsake home and occupation for his sake (iv. 8), and dwell with him in Jerusalem. The Bride in her turn now invites her Beloved to revisit in her company the lowly scenes of pastoral life, out of which his grace had raised her, and to which (though once forsaken at his bidding) her heart still innocently clings.

11. *Come, my beloved*] "Sponsus et Sponsa dicunt Veni ('Biblia Gregoriana,' Pars II. p. 203), false as a reading of Rev. xxii. 17, but true of the Song, of which it is a characteristic that both the Bridegroom (iv. 8) and the Bride (here) say "Come." So in the latter day the Church of the Redeemed in heavenly places will pray for the Lord's return to earth.

12. *let us see if...the tender grape appear*] Or, **the vine-blossom unfold**, the same word as at ii. 13, 15. See note there. It is now again precisely the same season as that in which the King had first visited the Bride on that well-remembered morning (ii. 8—17) in her mother's house. This thought enhances her desire to have him with her there again.

13. *The mandrakes*] Comp. Gen. xxx. 14. Another note of the season. The Hebrew name for the plant is *dudaim*, love-apples.

all manner of pleasant] **things**, both fruits and flowers; "the new" to be freshly gathered, "the old" already laid up in store.

Chap. VIII. **1.** *O that thou wert*] The Bride continues still addressing the King. The thought of home and of having his presence with her there fills her heart. Royal rank and splendour are grown wearisome. The King once called her "sister" and "sister-bride." Would he were indeed as a "brother," her mother's own child whom she might meet, embrace, and welcome everywhere without restraint or shame. Her love for him is simple, sacred, pure, free from the unrest and the stains of mere earthly passion.

2. *who would instruct me*] Her mother shall teach her how to behave herself towards him. Another rendering gives a better sense both literal and allegorical—**thou shouldest teach me** (Isai. liv. 13). Some allegorists make the whole passage (vii. 11—viii. 2) a prayer of the Synagogue for the Incarnation of the Word, like i. 2. (So Theodoret, Cassiodorus, &c.) Others, a prayer of the Church under both covenants for that complete union with the Incarnate Godhead which is still future (Mercier). The Targum makes the "mother's house" to be the temple on Mount Zion, the scene of Israel's early union with the Holy One (commemorated ch. iii. 6—v. 1), to which she now desires to return.

3. *His left hand should be*] The Bride now turns to and addresses the Chorus as before (ii. 6, 7). It is an exact repetition of ii. 6, and here rightly rendered as expressing a wish, not as stating a fact. It introduces the last repetition of the Bride's charge (*v.* 4), which forms the conclusion of the fifth part of the Song.

4. *that ye stir not up*] Literally, **why should ye stir up**, or **why** (margin). For "my love" read as before **Love**. The omission of "the roes and hinds" here is noticeable. Hebrew doctors regard this charge here and elsewhere (ii. 7 and iii. 5) as an admonition to Israel not to attempt obtaining a possession of,

beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth *that* bare thee.

6 ¶ Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* † cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.

† H *har*

7 Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a

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or restoration to, the Promised Land, and union or reunion there with the Holy One, before being inwardly prepared for it by the trials of the wilderness and the exile. This interpretation comes very near to what appears to be the genuine literal meaning (see note to ii. 7). They suppose the words to be here addressed by Messiah to Israel in "the wilderness of the peoples" (Ezek. xx. 35), in the latter day, as formerly (iii. 5) by Moses in the wilderness of Sinai. Being substantially a repetition of ii. 7, and iii. 5, they prepare us for a return to the scenes in which we first heard them.

Sixth Part. The Return Home. VIII. 5—14.

VIII. 5—7. *Last Vows sealed.*

The scene changes from Jerusalem to the birthplace of the Bride, where she is seen by former associates and the members of her family coming up from the open champaign towards her mother's house, leaning on the arm of the great King her Beloved.

5. *Who is this*] Compare and contrast with iii. 6, and foll. There the Bride is carried in procession, and with regal state, to meet the King her Bridegroom: here in sole companionship with him, and rustic simplicity, she leans on him as her Beloved. In the former scene all is splendour and exaltation, but here condescension, humility, and loving charm.

I raised thee up] **Beneath this apple-tree I wakened thee.** The King calls the Bride's attention to a fruit-tree, which they pass, as known by gentle memories to them both, the trysting-spot of earliest vows in this her home and birthplace. Interpreters are divided as to the speaker here. The Masoretic pointing of the Hebrew text (the most ancient traditional interpretation to which we can appeal) assigns these words to the Bride, but the majority of Christian Fathers to the King. The whole passage gains in clearness and dramatic expression by the latter arrangement, which supposes two speakers, first the King, reminding the Bride of a happy past (*vv.* 5, 6), and then the Bride, taking occasion from his words to ask for an assurance of his enduring affection (*vv.* 6, 7).

6, 7. *Set me as a seal*, &c.] Comp. Hagg. ii. 23; Jer. xxii. 24. The Bride says this as she clings to his arm and rests her head upon his bosom. Comp. John xiii. 23, xxi. 20. This brief dialogue corresponds to the longer one (iv. 7—v. 1), on the day of their espousals. There the Beloved sought and claimed the Bride, here she seeks and clings to *him*. Allegorical interpretations, which find a fulfilment of this in the close of the present dispensation, the restoration of Israel to the Land of Promise, and the manifestation of Messiah to His ancient people there, or His Second Advent to the Church, have a real foundation in the literal import of the words, especially when compared with other parts of the Song. See iii. 6, and note. The Targum makes *v.* 6 a prayer of Israel restored to the Holy Land that they may never again be carried into captivity, and *v.* 7 the Lord's answering assurance that Israel henceforth is safe. Comp. Isai. lxv. 24, lxii. 3, 4.

6. *for love is strong*, &c.] This glorious assertion of the might and purity of true love gives the key-note of the poem. It forms, as Delitzsch has well observed, the Old Testament counterpart to St Paul's panegyric (1 Cor. xiii.) under the New. The following is an attempt to analyze it.

(1) Love is here regarded as a universal power, an elemental principle of all true being, alone able to cope with the two eternal foes of God and man, Death and his kingdom (Sheôl).

"For strong as Death is Love,
Tenacious as Sheôl is Jealousy."

"Jealousy" is not here to be taken *in malam partem* (comp. Exod. xxxiv. 14), but only as another term for "Love," expressing the inexorable force and ardour of this affection, which can neither yield nor share possession of its object, and is identified in the mind of the sacred writer with Divine or true Life; so (2) he goes on to describe it as an all-pervading Fire, kindled by the Eternal One, and partaking of His essence:

"Its brands are brands of fire,
A lightning-flash from Jah."

Comp. Deut. iv. 24. Our version, "hath a most vehement flame," is a paraphrase. Coverdale's is better—"a very flame of the Lord." If this be the right interpretation of the Hebrew word *Shalheбeth-Jah*, the poet of the Old Testament surpasses even

man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

8 ¶ We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?

9 If she *be* a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she *be* a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.

10 I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found † favour.

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand *pieces* of silver.

12 My vineyard, which *is* mine, *is* before me: thou, O Solomon, *must have* a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.

13 Thou that dwellest in the gar-

† Heb. *peace.*

St Paul, and rises here to an intuition subsequently reserved for St John, and by him attained only through a life-long communion with Incarnate Love: "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 John iv. 16). (3) This divine principle is next represented as overcoming in its might all opposing agencies whatsoever, symbolized by Water as the antagonistic element to Fire in the natural world:

"Waters many have not power
To quench this love,
Nor streams to overwhelm it."

They may in a thousand forms hiss and strive against it, but the heavenly Fire will be triumphant in the end. (4) From all which follows that love, even as a human affection, must be reverenced, and dealt with as having its motive-power in itself, and not to be cajoled or bought by aught of different nature; the attempt to do this awakening only scorn in the spectators of the futile enterprise:

"Though one should give all substance of his house for love,
With scorn should he be scorned."

Gerson, the great chancellor of the University of Paris in the 15th century, died after finishing a Commentary on the Song. The words "Fortis est ut mors dilectio" were in dying continually on his lips (Corn. à Lapide). Some have been tempted to wish that the poem itself had closed with this triumphant strain, and some have even ventured to regard what follows as a spurious addition. Both were wrong. The concluding scene has its own significance and beauty, besides throwing light upon the past, and helping to illustrate the meaning of the whole.

VIII. 8—12. *The Bride's Intercession.*

A brief dialogue commencing with a question and answer probably made by the brothers of the Bride concerning a younger sister who will soon be old enough to be asked in marriage. How shall they provide for her when the day comes, or so that it may come well? The answer is given in the form of a parable: "If she be a wall," *i.e.* stedfast in chastity and virtue, one on whom no light advances can be made, then let us honour and reward her. This fortress-wall shall be crowned as it were with a tower or battlement of silver. But "if she be a door," light-minded and accessible to seduction (Prov. vii. 11, 12), then let us provide against assailants the protection of a cedar-bar or panel. In either case they wish to shew themselves as mindful of the safety of their younger sister as formerly of that of the now exalted Bride (i. 6, and ii. 15).

10. *I am a wall*, &c.] The Bride herself replies with the pride of innocence and virtue already crowned. She has shewn herself to be such a fortress-wall as her brothers have alluded to, and her reward has been the royal favour, or, as she phrases it for the sake of a paronomasia, "her finding peace in the eyes of the peaceful one—*Shalom* with *Shelomoh.*"

11. *Solomon had a vineyard*, &c.] She next turns to the King, and commends her brothers to his favourable regard by means of another parable. Solomon owns a vineyard in Baal-hamon (possibly Báalbak, and if so) situated in the warm and fertile plains of Cœle-Syria, overshadowed by the heights of Lebanon and Amana, already mentioned, iv. 8. This vineyard he has let out to tenants who have each to pay a rent-charge of a thousand silverlings into the royal treasury. The application follows.

12. *My vineyard, which is mine*, &c.] The Bride also has a vineyard of her own (i. 6), her beauty and virtue faithfully guarded by these same brothers in time past. This vineyard now belongs to Solomon. Let him have "the thousand" which is his due—she is indeed herself henceforth entirely his—but let the faithful keepers have their meed as well. At least two hundred silverlings should be theirs—a double tithe of royal praise and honour.

dens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear *it*.

14 ¶ †Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

† Heb. *Flee away*

VIII. 13, 14. *The Epilogue.*

The poem having opened with the song of a chorus in praise of the King (i. 2—4), concludes with a versicle recited by the Bride, renewing, at his request, and for his ear, the memory of their first day of love.

13. *cause me to hear*] thy voice, as at ii. 14.

14. *Make haste*] Better, **Flee**, *my Beloved*, &c. The Bride complies with the King's request by repeating the last words of her former strain (ii. 17), with one significant change. She no longer thinks of the possibility of separation. The "Mountains of Bether" (division) of ii. 17, are now "Mountains of Besamim" (spices). His haunts and hers are henceforth the same (comp. iv. 6).

ON SOME ARGUMENTS URGED BY PROF. GRAETZ FOR ASSIGNING A RECENT DATE TO THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

It has been already stated (Introduction, p. 667) that most Hebrew scholars have, since the publication of Ewald's important work in 1825, agreed in assigning to the Song an early date, the great majority fixing the time of its composition not later than 50 years subsequent to the reign of Solomon. Prof. Graetz has now (in his recent work) revived the extremest theories of some of his predecessors, maintaining that the Song was written during the Macedonian period in the latter half of the third century B.C. and shortly before the Hellenist apostasy in Judea.

The following is a brief summary of the main arguments by which this position is sustained.

1. Graetz begins by observing that it is a mere relic of the traditional theory concerning the Bible, which assumes that the Babylonish Captivity formed a boundary line between two literatures, and assigns in consequence to the post-exilian products of Hebrew genius an inferior character and subordinate position. He regards such an assumption as specially unjust to the Hagiographa. Modern criticism he says is coming more and more round to the conviction that the larger portion of this collection belongs to the post-exilian period, and even to an epoch subsequent to the conquests of Alexander the Great. A large number of Psalms, and among them some of the most poetical, were written in the times of the Maccabees, and so also the book of Daniel. Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles were of course written long after the return from Babylon. Parts of the books of Proverbs and Job are certainly post-exilian, *e.g.* the prologue and epilogue of Job, the commencement and conclusion of the book of Proverbs. The Lamentations of Jeremiah must naturally be assigned to the commencement of the exile. Put all these together and you have a large and by no means insignificant poetic literature. Four books only remain to be dated. Of these Esther is confessedly post-exilian. Ecclesiastes Graetz would himself assign to the Herodian period, and Ruth he thinks may be proved to belong in tendency and diction to Greek times, so that now "it is only the Song which is still claimed by modern criticism for the earlier period." This claim Graetz sets himself to undermine and destroy. It is obvious that this his first position combines some things confessedly true with others which are but doubtful assumptions or demonstrably false, and with no little *suppressio veri.* That Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Chronicles were written long years after the return from Babylon, is a fact established on quite other grounds than those on which are based the modern assumptions that large portions of the Psalter and the book of Daniel must be assigned to the times of the Maccabees. That the prologue and epilogue of Job give indication of a later date of composition than the rest of the book would, even if true, be no foundation for an argument that anything like the glorious inspired poetry, of which they form the setting, could have been produced in the later period. The whole reasoning fails, we think, to make out even a probability that such a poem as the Song of Songs could have been written in the times to which Graetz would assign it.

2. But all this is only a prelude to other arguments. The Song of Songs has, according to Graetz, notwithstanding its enigmas and obscurities, an obvious purpose and moral. It was written to commend the virtues of chastity and temperance, and to rebuke the vice and luxury of a particular period in the history of Israel. That period, however, Graetz will by no means allow to have been the age of Solomon or any one of his successors on the throne of David. He insists on identifying it with the times of an obscure magnate under the Ptolemies—Joseph, son of Tobias—whose history is given by Josephus ('Ant.' XII. 4) as having been appointed farmer of the revenue to Ptolemy Euergetes cir. B.C. 247, and as having lived for 22 years afterwards in pomp and luxury as the chief man in Palestine. To satirize the excesses and stem the pernicious influence of this Joseph and his circle was (in Graetz's view) one of the main purposes for which the Song was written, and is offered by him as the only theory which enables us to solve its numerous enigmas. It is a theory that hardly needs refutation.

3. A far more formidable argument for assigning a recent date to the Song is that based on its linguistic peculiarities. Graetz enumerates and discusses between 30 and 40 words and phrases which he classes, I. as Aramaisms and neo-Hebraisms discussed under 18 heads; II. as words derived from the ancient Persian language; he contends for the appearance in the Song of *two* such words; and III. as linguistic elements derived from Greek; these are discussed under 7 heads. The last indictment, which might seem at first the most formidable, reduces itself on even a superficial examination to very moderate dimensions. The derivation of כֹּפֶר from *κύπρος* for example, and that of מֶזֶג from *μίσγειν*, seem to be mere trifling. So also the etymology suggested for תלפיות, *τηλῶπις* or *τηλωπός*, and the consequent rendering of iv. 4, **Thy neck is like the tower of David, built for a distant view**, and נרד, iv. 14, changed into וֶרֶד for the sake of a derivation from *ῥόδον*. The only Greek derivation which has any measure of probability is the old one of אפריון from *φορεῖον*. But inasmuch as אפריון always means in later Hebrew a nuptial couch or a bridal litter with stately canopy (חופה), the ordinary Rabbinical derivation from פרה "to be fruitful" need not be given up. Of the two Persian etymologies the second is obtained by the substitution of כרמיל (carmine or crimson) for כרמל (Mount Carmel, vii. 6), a substitution as unpoetical as it is unnecessary. But the former of these Persian etymologies, that of פרדס from a supposed old Persian word equivalent to the Zend or Bactrian *pairidaêza* and original of the Greek *παράδεισος* carries much more weight, and is now generally accepted. (See Canon Rawlinson's Note on Neh. ii. 8 in this Comm.) But even so, Graetz's argument based upon it, that the Song could not have been written before the era of the Persian conquests in the sixth century B.C., would not be conclusive. The Hebrew language undoubtedly contained many foreign non-Semitic words at and before the time of Solomon, and may have been enriched with several additions during his reign (comp. 1 K. x. 11, note, additional Notes B and C at end of the Chapter, and M. Müller, 'Lect. on Lang.,' First Series, 5th ed. pp. 222—228). There are also several other foreign terms in the Song, נרד , אהלות , כרכם (Delitzsch 'H. L.' p. 22), which few would regard as indications of its post-Salomonic origin. Why may not פרדס have been as early an importation into the language as one of these? But the suggestion is not required. The Aryan derivation of פרדס may surely be considered doubtful. *Pairidaêza* in the 'Vendidad' (III. 58, Spiegel, p. 82) is not (as the Editor of this Commentary remarks) a park or hunting-ground or garden, but a heap or mound thrown up around a space in which a corpse-bearer is to be: "Let the worshippers of Ormuzd throw up about it a *pairidaêza*." He suggests that the old Persian term represented by *παράδεισος* may after all have been a Semitic word adopted by the Persian kings. Prof. de Lagarde ('Gesamm. Abhandl.' pp. 75, 76, 210, 211) arrives, though on different grounds, at a similar conclusion. Why may not פרדס have a Hebrew etymology (say from פרד "to spread out" with affirmative ס, like פרשז, Job xxvi. 9, from פרש with afformative ז) and be an old Hebrew word for a garden or plantation of fruit trees? This at any rate would justify Ibn Ezra's interpretation of the term already cited (see Comm. on Song iv. 13, note); with which may be compared that given in the Schāh of Al-Jauhari (kindly pointed out by Prof. Wright) explaining the use of the word in Arabic:

فِردوس كَرم مُفرَدس اي مُغرَس *i.e.* an orchard laid out in the manner of a Pardēs is one in which the trees are trained on walls or trellis work. The meaning of פרדס both in the Song and Eccles. ii. 5 is evidently rather that of a nursery garden for valuable fruit-trees, than of a hunting-park or plantation, which seems to have been the old Persian use of the term represented by the Greek *παράδεισος*. At any rate the proof is not established that פרדס was derived from *pairidaêza* or *παράδεισος*, or any non-Semitic word.

The real strength of Graetz's linguistic argument lies in the large number of so-called Aramaisms and other forms and words supposed to be characteristic of later Hebrew. Two general remarks must suffice here.

(1) Some of the most marked peculiarities of diction in the Song seem, when viewed in connection with the general purity of its Hebrew style, to be best accounted for on Ewald's hypothesis that they are provincialisms due to the author's predilection for the dialect spoken in his time in northern Palestine, and similar in kind, though fewer in number, to the Doric forms in Theocritus or the Scoticisms in Burns. Among such provincialisms (or archaisms) may be reckoned the use of שׁ for אשׁר throughout the Song, and, in combination with other particles, שלמה, שככה, כרמי שלי and such forms as עטיה, רעיה, לכי, מדכר for "mouth," &c.

(2) The Song contains a remarkable number of peculiar words; the non-appearance of some of these in other parts of Scripture is, however, easily accounted for. The Song is a work quite *sui generis*. Its subject and mode of treatment is unique among the writings of the Hebrew Canon. We need not therefore be surprised at meeting there with terms not found elsewhere in Scriptural books, but retained, it may be, in later Hebrew, or

met with in other Semitic dialects. Graetz's argument that such words must be regarded as of recent introduction into the language is perfectly fallacious. The appearance of a strange word in the Song, and its recurrence only in some tractate of the Mishnah, is no more proof of identity or proximity of date between the two writings than the like phenomena in Latin literature—that words, for instance, should be found in Apuleius and Tertullian which (as long ago observed by Bp. Kaye), though apparently unknown to Virgil or Cicero, were certainly familiar to the contemporaries of Plautus. Our remaining space will allow only of the mention of two other positions in the long array of arguments with which Graetz assails the antiquity of the Song.

4. In addition to the introduction of some Greek words, he imagines sundry allusions to manners and customs supposed to have been unknown in Palestine before the Macedonian conquest. These have all been carefully examined and their baselessness exhibited by a learned Jewish writer, Peter Smolenski, in two articles on Graetz's work which appeared last year in a Hebrew literary Journal of which Smolenski is himself the editor ('Haschachar,' III. 5, 6, pp. 257—270, and 313—330).

5. Finally, Graetz asserts that the Canonicity of the Song (as that of Ecclesiastes) was not established till towards the end of the first century of the Christian era, and then carried through by the School of Hillel, in the face of violent opposition from that of Shammai. The evidence offered in support of this assertion is, so far as the Song at least is concerned, of the slenderest kind. It amounts simply to this, that certain Jewish doctors of the first century are reported in the Mishnah to have expressed doubts as to the religious character of Ecclesiastes, and that the Schools of Hillel and Shammai are said to have been divided on this as on so many other subjects. *One* doctor, R. José (others say R. Meir), a disciple of R. Akiba, is reported to have said "Ecclesiastes defileth the hands" (*i.e.* is fully recognized as a holy book) "but about the (sanctity of the) Song of Songs there has been some division of opinion." This assertion evoked the memorable testimony of R. Akiba already quoted in the Introduction (p. 664) that "No man in Israel (i.e. no man of real authority) had ever raised a doubt concerning the sanctity of the Song of Songs" and that "if there had been ever any difference of opinion it had only concerned Ecclesiastes." ('Iadaim,' III. 5.) The authenticity of this remarkable witness rests on precisely the same grounds as that of the other doctors, and is arbitrarily impugned by Graetz in the face of all documentary evidence. ('Kohélet,' p. 165.)

END OF VOLUME IV.

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Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical.

TRANSLATED, ENLARGED, AND EDITED

—BY—

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Professor in the Union Theological Seminary, New York.

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